

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT



10017035330



Theology Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT  
California











*SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, 1965*



8  
3  
92  
2

# *SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, 1965*

SELECTED PAPERS, 92D ANNUAL FORUM

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY, MAY 23-28, 1965



*Published 1965 for the*

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE *by*  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, *New York and London*

Copyright © 1965  
National Conference on Social Welfare, Columbus, Ohio  
Published by Columbia University Press

Library of Congress Card Number: 5-35377



MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# *The National Conference on Social Welfare*

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE is a voluntary organization of individual and organizational members whose major function is to provide a national forum for the critical examination of basic problems and issues in the social welfare field.

These annual forums furnish a two-way channel of communication between paid and volunteer workers, between social welfare and allied fields, and between the service organizations and the social work profession.

Since 1874, through its annual forums and its comprehensive publications program, the National Conference has reflected the history and dynamic development of social welfare in this country. Its national office serves as headquarters for state conferences in social welfare; as the secretariat for the International Conference of Social Work; and as a clearinghouse for educational materials for use on a local, state, national, and international level.

Among the newer services developed by the Conference in recent years is its library of unpublished Annual Forum manuscripts; its Document Retrieval Program, including the data-processed production of the *KWIC Index* of its publications since 1874; and its Selected Bibliography Service.





## Foreword

SOCIAL CHANGE ROOTED IN LAW has awakened society to its responsibility for the rights of all of its citizens. Social agencies, inevitably, have been involved in this. In some instances they have used their specific knowledge and skill in effecting these changes; in some instances they are still searching for ways of relating to these changes.

Many of the papers presented at the 92d Annual Forum, whose theme was "Social Change through Welfare and the Law," were especially concerned with the impact of law on social welfare. These will be found in the companion volume, *The Social Welfare Forum, 1965*. For *Social Welfare Practice, 1965*, the Editorial Committee chose for publication mainly those that had to do with changing practice and innovation in the social scene. More specifically, the Committee was interested in selecting papers that show practice responsive to social changes, practice in consonance with what we know, and practice not yet responsive to these changes. All reflect the response of social welfare to the problems that face social welfare today.

All social work methods—casework, group work, and community organization—are covered. Evidence is clear that all methods are looking at issues in broader perspective in relation to the changing social scene.

Several papers on administration have been included. These show the recognition and awareness of administration in creating a climate in which social welfare may respond to a changing scene. The Stein, Finestone, and Wakeman papers emphasize the need for research and for new administrative approaches to make this possible.

In contrast, the Ferguson, Giesmar, and Sauber papers are evidence that our knowledge is not being fully utilized.

The greatest number of papers—the Epstein, Goldberg, Hartford, Jacobs, Riessman, Shiffman, and Simon contributions—fall into areas where practice responds to needs and comes to grips with the changing situation.

While several of these papers are concerned with the anti-poverty programs and the involvement of low-income groups in the development of services, two were included because of their concern with the role of voluntary agencies in community action programs—the Edelston and Rachlis papers.

The Madison paper was singled out as an excellent survey of adoption practices. The Meyer paper, dealing with “traditional” casework, offers an example of the utilization of social work knowledge in a new and dynamic way in relation to the present situation.

It is needless to add that it was impossible to include all of the many good papers presented at the Conference. It is hoped by the Committee, however, that this volume will give some sense of the ferment going on in social work and its awareness of the important role it plays in social change.

One last word in relation to the selections: the Editorial Committee was unanimous in its selection of all the papers published in this volume.

Esther Lazarus, *Chairman*  
KATHRYN CLOSE  
ARNULF M. PINS

*August, 1965*

# Contents

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE	v
FOREWORD <i>Esther Lazarus</i>	vii
THE CONTRIBUTORS	xi
VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS	
I. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS <i>Harold C. Edelston</i>	3
II. A CASE EXAMPLE <i>David Rachlis</i>	16
STRATEGIES FOR RESEARCH IN PUBLIC WELFARE	
ADMINISTRATION <i>Samuel Finestone</i>	29
ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP IN COMPLEX SERVICE	
ORGANIZATIONS <i>Herman D. Stein</i>	42
USING DATA PROCESSING TO ANALYZE WORKER ACTIVITY	
<i>Roy P. Wakeman</i>	54
CHANGES IN VALUES CONCERNING SEXUAL BEHAVIOR	
<i>Elizabeth A. Ferguson</i>	65
PLANNERS' AND CONSUMERS' PRIORITIES OF SOCIAL WELFARE	
NEEDS <i>Ludwig L. Geismar and Bruce W. Lagay</i>	76
UNWED MOTHERS WHO KEEP THEIR CHILDREN: RESEARCH AND	
IMPLICATIONS <i>Mignon Sauber and Janice Paneth</i>	94

GROUP WORK TO HELP OLDER ADULTS FULFILL CITIZEN ROLES <i>Howard V. Epstein</i>	107
GROUP WORK PRACTICE IN A JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER <i>Theodore Goldberg</i>	119
EFFECTING VALUE CHANGE IN RACE RELATIONS THROUGH GROUP SERVICE AGENCIES <i>Louise A. Brown and Margaret E. Hartford</i>	139
NEW WAYS OF SERVING AGRICULTURAL MIGRANTS <i>Ethel W. Jacobs</i>	150
SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE MOBILE POOR IN URBAN AREAS <i>Savilla Millis Simons</i>	162
NEW APPROACHES TO MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR LOW- INCOME PEOPLE <i>Frank Riessman</i>	174
INVOLVEMENT OF LOW-INCOME PEOPLE IN PLANNED COMMUNITY CHANGE <i>Bernard M. Shiffman</i>	188
ADOPTION—YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW <i>Bernice Q. Madison</i>	205
CASEWORK BELOW THE POVERTY LINE <i>Carol H. Meyer</i>	229
ABSTRACTS	243
INDEX	247

# *The Contributors*

- LOUISE A. BROWN, Executive Director, Cleveland YWCA, Cleveland
- HAROLD C. EDELSTON, Executive Director, Health and Welfare Council of the Baltimore Area
- HOWARD V. EPSTEIN, Director, Golden Age Division, Jewish Community Center of Cleveland
- ELIZABETH A. FERGUSON, Professor, Department of Sociology, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
- SAMUEL FINESTONE, Professor of Social Work, Columbia University School of Social Work; Director, Experimental Welfare Center Project, New York City Department of Welfare
- LUDWIG L. GEISMAR, Professor of Social Welfare, Graduate School of Social Work, Rutgers—the State University, New Brunswick, N.J.
- THEODORE GOLDBERG, Assistant Professor, Division of Social Service, Indiana University, Indianapolis
- MARGARET E. HARTFORD, Professor of Social Work, School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University, Cleveland
- ETHEL W. JACOBS, Director, Program Services, National Travelers Aid Association, New York
- BRUCE W. LAGAY, Graduate School of Social Work, Rutgers—the State University, New Brunswick, N.J.
- BERNICE Q. MADISON, Chairman, Department of Social Welfare, San Francisco State College
- CAROL H. MEYER, Professor of Social Work, Columbia University School of Social Work, New York
- JANICE PANETH, Assistant Director, Social Service Department, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York
- DAVID RACHLIS, Planning Associate, Health and Welfare Association of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh
- FRANK RIESSMAN, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Director, Mental Health Aide Program, Lincoln Hospital, New York
- MIGNON SAUBER, Director, Research Department, Community Council of Greater New York, New York
- BERNARD M. SHIFFMAN, Director, Program Development and Training Community Progress, Inc., New Haven, Conn.
- SAVILLA MILLIS SIMONS, General Director, National Travelers Aid Association, New York
- HERMAN D. STEIN, Dean and Professor of Social Work, School of Applied Social Sciences, Western Reserve University, Cleveland
- ROY P. WAKEMAN, social worker, Atlantic Street Center, Seattle



*SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, 1965*





# *Voluntary Agencies and Community Action Programs*

## I. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

by *HAROLD C. EDELSTON*

AS EACH NEW PIECE of "Great Society" legislation is enacted, it is understandable if the executive of the local voluntary agency feels engulfed by, and insignificant amidst, the unending flow of new Federal money being pumped into his community. It is, of course, not the first time in history that Federal social legislation has confronted voluntary social agencies with a challenge to their self-ascribed role in the local community. But perhaps never before has the challenge been accompanied by such wide opportunities for voluntary agencies to participate as instruments for the implementation of Federal programs. Several titles of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) and of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) authorize Federal units to contract directly or through local mechanisms with voluntary agencies for the conduct of certain features of the programs established by the legislation. Agency executives of this writer's acquaintance seem eager to embark upon the program opportunities and capitalize on the offering of Federal funds to expand their programs. But a damper on their enthusiasm is often a governing board steeped in the tradition of voluntarism, which for them is characterized by freedom from governmental involvement and constraints. Many lay members of governing boards are convinced that a distinction between public and voluntary effort should be maintained, without necessarily comprehending exactly what that distinction is. Though they may subscribe to coopera-

tion with the new Federal action programs, financial participation is frequently seen as incompatible with the basic nature and objectives of their organization.

But whatever the beliefs of the layman, the distinctive role which voluntary agencies have historically ascribed to themselves has been becoming progressively less theirs exclusively. The new action programs, especially those embodied in the EOA and the MDTA, are clothed with some of the traditional attributes of the voluntary field. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the voluntary field to claim a continuing monopoly on these attributes, and the discomfort of the agency executive is increased when he is asked by contributors or budget committees to explain an apparent overlap of his program with those under governmental auspices.

The new Federal action programs are challenging the administrator to define his agency's role, if only to assess the propriety of becoming an instrument in their conduct or otherwise relating to them. In describing the role of the voluntary agency, most spokesmen for the field stress these characteristics:

1. Flexibility of policy and administration which enables the agency to change the course of service programs easily and in response to changing needs
2. Commitment to experimentation and innovation which will provide a model for government to follow
3. Direct lay control of policy-making and provision of opportunities for lay citizen participation in conduct of program
4. Ability to carry out a sectarian or religious objective
5. Ability to speak out freely and objectively on issues.

In the new Federal action programs there is an avowed intent to assume all these attributes except that pertaining to sectarian or religious objectives. For example, flexibility has been stressed in the community action programs of the EOA through the promotion of local private nonprofit corporations which presumably can bypass the red tape and rigidity of local government structure. Experimentation and innovation were ascribed to the EOA by the President when in his message introducing the legislation he said: "The Act does not merely expand old programs or improve

what is already being done. It charts a new course.”<sup>1</sup> The MDTA also affords ample opportunity for experimentation through its program of experimental and demonstration projects. Citizen participation has been highlighted as a feature of the EOA. In his message the President stated that the community action program “asks men and women throughout the country to prepare long-range plans for the attack on poverty in their own local communities. These are not plans prepared in Washington and imposed upon hundreds of different situations. They are based on the fact that local citizens best understand their own problems, and know best how to deal with these problems.”

Of all the challenges to the voluntary agency posed by the new programs, seizure by government of the initiative for innovation merits the greatest concern. Disparagement of the voluntary establishment's ability to change itself, to say nothing of effecting change in others, was a significant element in the philosophy of the programs which were the antecedents of the antipoverty program. The latter program emerged from the thesis of the Ford Foundation and the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency which generally depreciated the role of established agencies in bringing about needed social change to strike at the roots of social problems. A prime ingredient of the earlier action programs from which the antipoverty program was fashioned was a strategy “of inducing change and adaptation in prevailing social services and educational institutions, employment services, even political structures.”<sup>2</sup>

The implications to the voluntary agency are thus a denial of its own image of itself. Instead of being the innovator, it has been relegated to a place in the establishment which is to be acted upon; the target of change rather than the agent thereof. The Federal Government now presumes to be the pathfinder, pioneer, and innovator to lead the way for the voluntary agency.

An obvious explanation for the loss of initiative to government

<sup>1</sup> Message of the President of the United States relative to Poverty, March 16, 1965, 88th Congress, House of Representatives, Document No. 243.

<sup>2</sup> Sanford Kravitz, “New Patterns of Community Planning” (Washington, D.C.: President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, 1962; mimeographed).

could be found in the vastly greater resources of the Federal purse. But there have been other explanations offered by critics who have discredited the ability of the voluntary agency to innovate the fundamental changes required to attack the causes of poverty. It has been alleged that the voluntary agency cannot bring about necessary social changes because it is under the control of interests which have a huge investment in the *status quo*. The critics assert that the power order with which many agencies are allied seeks to meet its commitment to the deprived through services which tend to perpetuate the state of deprivation. According to them, accepting membership on a board of directors is a way of buying a clear conscience, while at the same time keeping the poor in a continued state of compromise. Presumably, it is to correct such powerlessness of the poor that the EOA provides for their "maximum feasible participation."

The critics have also alleged that the nature of the controlling power over established agencies has influenced the methods employed in providing service. The charge has been that agencies perpetuate existing social conditions by practicing methods of service in which the emphasis is on individual adjustment to society instead of changes in the conditions of society which produce the problem.

Voluntary agencies have also been accused of resisting change because of fear of losing contributor support. The detractors maintain that established agencies are so fearful of losing the confidence of contributors that they avoid candid self-examination which might reveal program deficiencies that would necessitate change. Instead, voluntary agencies are said to make unsubstantiated claims of results and rigidly adhere to conventional methods and programs.

However true these allegations may be, the widespread attention they have received, coupled with the advent of the new action programs, has already jostled the complacency of many established agencies. A basic question at issue is whether the faults attributed to the voluntary establishment are so immutable as to preclude the effective participation of agencies in the war on poverty. The community action organizations in a few communities appear to have

concluded that new programs must be organized under new auspices. The presumption is that entirely new structures will vitiate the obstacles to innovation which hamper established agencies. Even if it is granted that at the inception of a community action program new structures have advantage over the old, it remains to be seen how long the advantage can be maintained. The political forces that control the new programs create obstacles as real as those created by the forces in control of established agencies. Furthermore, the desire to produce an image of success at the expense of real accomplishment is not an exclusive malady of voluntary agencies; the antipoverty program even now is striving hard to compile success stories for public consumption, and its willingness and ability to expose its failures are still to be demonstrated.

In contrast to communities where the emphasis is on new auspices for new programs, other communities seem to be harnessing the resources of established agencies as allies in the war on poverty. At the Federal level also the resistance to the use of established agencies which marked the early stages of the program of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency seems to be moderating.

The established voluntary agency at this particular point has an unusual opportunity to change direction because of the favorable climate created in most local communities by the Federal action programs. Those obstacles which are attributable to antagonistic attitudes of board members can be countered more easily at present because the war on poverty has captivated the imagination of a diverse public. So the agency executive who exerts leadership to bring his agency into the mainstream of efforts to attack poverty in cooperation with government may have his best chance now.

Before jumping on the band wagon, however, it would be well for any voluntary agency to assess the propriety of its doing so. The pressures are great to initiate programs for the poor irrespective of the agency's purpose. The recriminations of critics who deplore the abandonment of the slums by voluntary agencies has created a deep sense of guilt and a compulsion to return in order



to absolve that guilt. Some agencies have felt affected even though their stated objective is to serve a particular clientele which does not inhabit the slums. The legitimacy of service to middle-class clientele is being almost forgotten, but the fact remains that a voluntary agency can still justify its existence even with a middle-class clientele.

Once having made the decision to relate itself to the new programs, an established agency faces the question of how. To presume that it can change direction merely out of a desire and a commitment to do so is unrealistic. New funds are usually an essential prerequisite. There are some kinds of changes and innovations which an agency can make without additional funds, but these are greatly limited in kind and number. New money is usually required. However, new sources of voluntary funds are not likely to become available in large enough amounts to make significant new programs possible. Fund-raising generally has reached a plateau, and no new large private sums to finance bold new ventures by established agencies appear on the horizon. Even if large new amounts were to become available, the administrator would have to resist counterbalancing pressures to expand inadequately financed ongoing services.

In the absence of new funds, an alternative would be to discontinue a program and divert its funds to the new endeavor. But this is generally not a feasible alternative except in a few isolated circumstances. For example, service might be discontinued if a substitute auspice satisfactory to the current clientele could be found; or if the service had so slight an impact on its recipients that its loss would not be felt. But more usually the agency has good reason to believe that its clientele would react sharply to withdrawal of service. This likelihood in itself is not the only concern. Because many services are only partially subsidized, the fiscal structure of some agencies would be jeopardized if a major service were interrupted and its earnings which help support the basic program were lost. In other situations, where fee income may not be as crucial but the recipients of service come from the contributors who help support the agency, withdrawal of service would be resisted. The resistance would be keenest from the fund-

raisers, who would fear loss of contributor support. So the agency executive who wants to change direction in order to give new or expanded service to the impoverished population is caught in a vise of financial strictures from which he can extricate himself only with a new source of funds.

For most agencies, then, the only route open is the acquisition of a contract with one of the federally financed programs. Some are seeking Federal funds opportunistically merely to increase coverage of a service they are already providing. But the professed innovating and pioneering role of the voluntary agency suggests a more appropriate role. Many components of the new Federal programs are treading untested ground, and at present there is only the slimmest evidence of their potential effectiveness. Current political pressures may make experimentation and objective evaluation of results most difficult to attain. Because the voluntary agency has the capacity to remain relatively disengaged from the political pressures to which official bodies are exposed, they may be able to assume responsibility for small-scale programs which need testing before large sums of money are committed.

In assuming the role of innovator within the context of a Federal action program, the voluntary agency may in some instances enter a field of endeavor which has heretofore been the exclusive jurisdiction of a public agency. The voluntary agency may then create a threat to that public agency. The competitive situation will evoke differing opinions within and without the established agency. There will be those who will look upon the entry of the voluntary group as a means of stimulating change in the public monopoly. Others, including the public unit whose domain has been entered, will complain of wasteful duplication, overlap, and unnecessary competition. That there have been such reverberations is evident from the reports of experimental and demonstration projects authorized by the MDTA, some of which have been contracted out to voluntary agencies and thus offer competition to the public employment services. On the other side of the ledger, there have also been indications from reports issued by these projects that the greater flexibility of the voluntary agencies has in a number of instances enabled them to break new ground which

would have been barred to the employment service because of civil service restrictions and other bureaucratic obstacles.

However established agencies may relate to the new action programs, there are no greater implications for change in their administrative role than those contained in the EOA's requirement for maximum feasible participation of the poor. The emphasis being given to this aspect of the poverty program and the publicity for communities which have thus far failed to carry out the spirit of the requirement leave no doubt of serious intent. Skeptics who cynically viewed the cryptic provision in the law as mere lip service to a romantic ideal are becoming convinced otherwise.

An immediate and direct impact will be felt by agencies that seek Federal funds through the local community action organization because their requests will likely be reviewed by bodies which include representative poor people. The image which the requesting agency presents to these poor may subtly influence their decisions. Of even greater import is the fact that actual evidence may be required that the poor have been involved in developing the program proposal for which the agency is seeking support.

At present the implications for the policy-making functions of the voluntary agency are conjectural. But if participation of the poor in the policy-making of the community action organization actually takes place, it will surely permeate the total complex of services which are related in any way to the Federal community action programs. Participating voluntary agencies will be unable to insulate themselves against this development and may well be compelled to recruit low-income clients for membership on their boards of directors.

Though some types of voluntary agencies have occasionally flirted with the idea of client participation on the governing body, the idea has rarely materialized. The more common emphasis in board recruitment has been on the prestige and influence which a member can bring to the board. "Broad representation" has usually been sought, but the term has usually meant broad representation of influential segments of the community. Persons are generally sought who are eminent in a variety of fields and who by



their presence can influence the fund-allocating body, contributors, and the community as a whole. In view of recent developments, inclusion of poor clients on a board can at least offer the potential of influencing the body which allocates community action funds. Even with this kind of self-serving rationale, the task of changing the traditional value emphasis of typical nominating committees will not be an easy one.

In addition to including representation of the client population in policy-making, the voluntary agency which becomes a financial participant in a community action program will inevitably be required to employ members of its low-income client population in nonprofessional staff positions. The use of the indigenous poor in nonprofessional positions has been labeled a "revolution in social work,"<sup>3</sup> but it is yet too soon to determine how much of a revolution it is to be. Agencies have used low-income persons of limited educational attainment in such positions as homemakers, house-parents, recreation leaders, and so on. However, extension of their assignment to a wider variety of positions is now being urged through the poverty program. Also involved is a lowering of educational qualifications so that even those who have not finished high school can qualify for nonprofessional positions. If there is a basic departure from past practice, two aspects of it are the greater emphasis on the need of the poor person for a job and less on the agency's requirements for the job; and employment of the poor to influence agency policy and practice.

The established agency which participates in a far-reaching effort to employ low-income persons may find its task difficult. The executive may encounter an inherent resistance by the professional to the use of nonprofessional staff in new positions and a concern with the crossing of jurisdictional lines. Status anxiety and hostility between the two groups have even been reported from such organizations as Mobilization for Youth, in which one would expect the climate for acceptance of the nonprofessional to be more favorable than in an established agency.<sup>4</sup> Reports from

<sup>3</sup> Frank Riessman, "The Revolution in Social Work: the New Nonprofessional," *Trans-Action*, II, No. 1 (1964), 12-17.

<sup>4</sup> George Brager, "The Indigenous Worker: a New Approach to the Social Work Technician," *Social Work*, X, No. 2 (1965), 33-40.

other projects which have been demonstrating extended use of the indigenous poor in social work jobs suggest further potential problems: the nonprofessionals' impatience with agency policies and rules; their predilection to exaggerate minor problems into big ones; their resentment of administrative authority; and their tendency to create a gulf between themselves and other agencies. Nevertheless, despite the problems to be encountered, there can be little quarrel with the underlying self-help rationale for participation of the poor through employment opportunities.

Once having made the decision to contract for an action program financed with Federal funds, the voluntary agency executive may be faced with a variety of practical administrative complications. Many of these may be unprecedented in the life of his agency, and therefore prior planning may not take into account the pitfalls to be encountered. Some of these practical difficulties are revealed in the available periodic reports of agencies with contracts for MDTA experimental and demonstration projects. Others have been revealed to the writer through the experience of his own organization and others with which he has had contact. The significance of these difficulties is not that they are insurmountable but that they may influence some basic changes in administrative practice within the entire agency.

Among the practical problems being experienced are:

1. Lack of provision in the budget for staff to handle the extensive reporting requirements and accounting procedures of which the agency executive had not been previously aware when the program proposal had been developed
2. Standards required in the program which are incompatible with existing standards of the agency

Examples include the \$1.25 wage established for the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which presents a dilemma to an executive who has in his employ individuals who are being paid less; the requirement that an agency carry Workmen's Compensation even though it has never done so; the requirement that the project funds be kept in a separate bank account, and so forth.

3. Contractual specifications which are too tightly drawn to permit creative administration of the program

4. Long delays in obtaining contract revisions when these are clearly necessary to flexible conduct of the program

5. Cleavages which arise between existing staff and the new staff

The glamour of the new action program sometimes leads present staff to look upon the new staff members as interlopers, while the new staff often strives to maintain a separate identity. Separate physical locations of the programs may intensify the divisiveness.

6. Long delays in the receipt of funds to meet current expenses.

In one project in the writer's own community, the staff of a project went unpaid for almost three months because of an interminable delay in Washington in the processing of the voucher for funds.

A special assortment of administrative problems awaits the unwary voluntary agency executive who enters upon a contract to conduct a time-limited program. Among the frequent complaints by agencies engaged in short-term action projects have been the lack of lead time between approval and the actual initiation of the project, when the time required for recruiting staff, finding facilities, and so on, leaves insufficient time to carry out the program.

Recruitment of personnel for short-term projects also is difficult for the small voluntary agency because of the uncertain and brief tenure to be offered the candidates. Large organizations can shift personnel within their own structures so that an assignment can be made to a short-term project with assurance that another position with the organization awaits the employee at the conclusion of the project. Smaller voluntary agencies lack this administrative elasticity.

Often the so-called "demonstration" project is a demonstration for the Federal funding unit, which wants to fill in gaps in its knowledge with the experience of local projects; but to the local agency, the project represents a means of expanding its own work in the community. The local agency forgets the time limit, and when time has expired, seeks to continue the project with local money. More and more resistance to such demonstrations is be-

coming apparent among local funding officials, who are beginning to look upon them as a ruse to obtain a commitment of support from the local body.

An established agency which receives regular operating funds from a central fund-raising and allocating organization and then becomes a contractor for a Federal program may face administrative complications in conforming to two sets of standards and procedures. Salary ranges, permissible expenditures, and accounting systems may vary between regular and new programs because of the different requirements of the funding bodies. Not only may the two different systems create administrative distress for the executive, but there may also be ramifications for personnel because of differential treatment accorded staff members on the basis of whence the money that supports their programs is derived. For example, morale may be affected when certain fringe benefits are provided by one funding source and not by the other.

A further concern of the central fund-raising organization is the extent to which the transactions of an affiliated agency enter the public domain when a Federal contract is granted. Publication of salaries in the press is the particular aspect of the problem on which attention is being focused. Because of fear of negative contributor reaction, salaries in voluntary agencies have not been a matter of open public record in most communities, whereas the salaries paid to specific public employees are, even to the extent of frequent publication of the specific salaries paid to specific public employees. The voluntary agency which receives public funds for the support of a program may be expected to submit to the same degree of public scrutiny of salaries paid for the positions financed with public money. The possibility further exists that once having established the precedent, demands may be forthcoming from the press for comparable information for the agency's regular program. In the writer's own community requests of this kind have already been made.

The public relations import to the central fund-raising body is, of course, obvious. Though any contributor to a federated fund-raising campaign is usually accorded access to fiscal information concerning participating agencies, the press in most communities has usually spared agencies the spotlight of publicity on salaries

and other sensitive information. Financial participation in the new Federal programs threatens the sheltered position previously enjoyed, and might well be a source of irritation for the fund-raising body.

Fund-raising considerations may also act as a deterrent to financial participation by centrally financed agencies in a Federal action program. The magnitude of publicity and exaggerated expectations for the poverty program have given fund-raisers one more explanation to make to the reluctant contributor who questions why social agencies need further support when the President has announced an end to all poverty. Fund-raisers of this writer's acquaintance have expressed apprehension that it may become more difficult to make the explanation when agencies supported by contributed funds are also accepting substantial Federal sums for program purposes. They fear that the explanation that the new tax money does not relieve the recipient agency of its established responsibilities may not suffice. These same fund-raisers also concede, however, that the problem is likely to be transitory and merely the result of public attention being focused for the moment on a new and controversial program.

These administrative complexities will inevitably influence the regular operations of established voluntary agencies. This, of course, is the explicit intent of the new programs—to reshape the institutions which have become alienated from the deprived low-income population. The process may be painful; the executive who enters into a financial relationship with a community action program merely to capitalize on it for the aggrandizement of his own organization may find the price unexpectedly high. There will be disquieting moments when he must deal with the internal resistances and animosities engendered by “maximum feasible participation of the poor”; when he must seek adjustments in the wage and personnel standards of existing operations in order to maintain staff morale; when he must respond to internal and external challenges to the appropriateness of his agency's involvement in a federally financed program; and when he must cope with incongruities between new and existing operations.

As yet, local experience with community action programs has not generally progressed to a stage where incontrovertible gen-



eralizations can be drawn. Most of this presentation has therefore been based on limited experience and has had to depend on considerable conjecture. It is as yet difficult to predict the extent to which established voluntary agencies will be afforded opportunities to become contractors for parts of the action programs; nor can it be forecast with any certainty how much voluntary money will be diverted to programs that support the official action programs. But there can be no question that the major vehicles for the community action programs will be the major-impact agencies—public education, public welfare, public housing, urban renewal, public employment services, and public health. Another source of serious competition for a role in the programs is big business, which has succeeded in selling its services in the antipov-erty effort. The voluntary agency cannot aspire to compete with the public bodies and with business in bigness and program coverage without losing the essential attributes of flexibility of administration and malleability of program. Its role must be limited if its contribution is to be unique and meaningful. The first order of business for many established agencies is to recapture some of the attributes which they have lost in the professionalization of services and administrative relationships with central funding bodies. If, as it has long maintained, the established agency can move more quickly than the official body, can be more imaginative and offer less resistance to change, in the long run it will provide the very ingredients in the new action programs which inspired their design.

## II. A CASE EXAMPLE

by *DAVID RACHLIS*

WHEN THE PLANS FOR PROGRAMS in the war on poverty are closely examined it may be discovered that our predecessors have stolen our best ideas. Many of the features of the Economic

Opportunity Act (EOA) are neither new nor innovative but rather a resurrection of program ideas and concepts that also made sense in another era. This phenomenon also holds true for voluntary casework services. Although newly developed casework programs are innovative, their basis is largely historical.

In 1922 Mary Richmond wrote:

It is not enough for social workers to speak the language of democracy; they must have in their hearts its spiritual conviction of the infinite worth of our common humanity before they can be fit to do any form of social work whatsoever. Life itself achieves significance and value not from the esoteric things shared by a few, but from the great common experiences of the race—from the issues of birth and death, of affection satisfied and affection frustrated, from those chances and hazards of daily living that come to all men. Unless these conditions common to all humanity strongly appeal to us, or until they do, we are not ready to adopt social case work as our major interest.<sup>1</sup>

The role played by the voluntary casework agency is one which incorporates the idea of assisting our common humanity to share the common experiences of the human race. This challenge is at the heart of the war on poverty. This is the challenge that casework agencies in Pittsburgh are attempting to embrace. While voluntary casework programs under the EOA in different communities will have unique elements, I am sure that many aspects of our plan have general applicability.

The Community Action Program (CAP) in Pittsburgh is an experimental system of eight decentralized service centers located in the most deprived sections of the city. Each of the eight centers will eventually have a complete system of neighborhood-based services, including legal aid, employment offices, compensatory education, health programs, housing improvement, day care, homemakers, family counseling, and others. In effect, this system is a facsimile of the centralized city-wide services already available to Pittsburgh residents. The prime differences are the clientele served, agency staffing and control, the quantity and the place of delivery of services. Agencies such as the Legal Aid Society, the Allegheny County Health Department, and the family service

<sup>1</sup> Mary Richmond, *What Is Social Case Work?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1922), p. 249.

agencies, which are basically centralized operations, now will have protected experimental units, largely unrelated to the standard programs, located where they are presumably needed the most—serving the poor where they live.

All the services located in selected poor neighborhoods—and I have mentioned only several of many—will be tied together through a neighborhood coordinator, generally a settlement house community organization worker. One of the main jobs of the coordinator is to help to relate together on a case-by-case basis all the services that are being used by a family at any particular time. This means the development of a neighborhood social service exchange, frequent case conferences, a willingness to share information, a definitive division of responsibilities between agencies. Above all, it means a commitment to working together, not only with other organizations, but with the neighborhood, the city, and the Federal Government on behalf of the most deprived and neglected segment of the community.

Although the agencies will be coordinated in the neighborhood, coordination will also exist in the top administrative and planning body, the Mayor's Committee on Human Resources, Inc., through which Federal funds are channeled by contract to the participating agencies. The Mayor's Committee approves the programs of each participating agency, although it has no direct control over agency operations. Each agency must agree in its contract to certain key provisions regarding coordination to assure that the agency services are woven into the total fabric of the CAP and, in particular into the citizen participation aspect.

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 has a citizen participation feature, which is included in the definition of the term "community action program." The definition, in part, states that a "community action program" is one "which is developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served." ■ In Pittsburgh we have been vigorous in assuring participation of the poor. Citizens have an extremely important role in planning, approving, and evaluating the total community action programs

■ Public Law 88-452, 88th Congress, S. 2642, August 20, 1964, p. 9.



through each policy and operating level. This includes the determination, review, and evaluation of family service programs, among others. Local citizen committees attached to the coordinating agency will also serve as a source of referral, and as promoters and critics of agency services. While citizens have traditionally been the backbone of voluntary agencies as members of their boards, they are usually persons of prominence, wealth, and influence. In the CAP the citizen committees are composed of a wide cross section of the neighborhood, especially including the poor.

The family service program is based on a simple premise and a simple structure. The premise is that those organizations with expertise in family counseling should develop and conduct the new programs. Seven voluntary agencies or voluntary agency departments provide casework services: Catholic Social Service; Family and Children's Service; Jewish Family and Children's Service; Lutheran Service Society, the Salvation Army; American Red Cross; and Travelers Aid Society. The American Red Cross is not participating in the CAP, and although Travelers Aid Society will have a contract for a program, its service is limited to assistance to nonresident migrant families.

The five participating agencies represent a spectrum of auspices, size, clientele, funding, services, salaries, and qualifications of personnel. From the names alone, it is apparent that four are sectarian agencies and one is nonsectarian. Furthermore, three are members of the Community Chest and one is a member of the United Fund, and another is independently supported.<sup>3</sup> The size of the individual operations varies from two caseworkers to a complement of some sixty professionals and subprofessionals. The largest agency is Family and Children's Service, the nonsectarian agency. Family and Children's Service is already decentralized with

<sup>3</sup> The United Fund-Community Chest structure in Allegheny County is a mutation of the normal pattern of such organizations. The United Fund raises money for two groups of agencies—those which are locally controlled, and those which are responsible to larger national organizations. The United Fund allocates directly to agencies with national affiliations and also makes an allocation to the Community Chest, which is treated as a single agency. The Community Chest in turn, has its own budget committee structure and procedure for distribution to about sixty participating organizations.

two district offices in Pittsburgh and three district offices in other sections of the county. The aggregate yearly family service operating budget for the five agencies in 1964 was approximately \$1,600,000.

Each agency center will be located on the main thoroughfare of the chosen neighborhood, possibly in a store front or some other easily accessible and informal setting, as part of the total centralized neighborhood complex of services. Several agencies have begun operations from their regular offices, but none has yet established permanent neighborhood offices. Grouping facilities in one spot is intended to make coordination and referral simpler and more effective, and also will be a tangible demonstration to the community of the availability and reality of the services.

The primary objective of the family service program is really to reach families where poverty is a chronic illness. These are the families to whom traditional services and institutions are suspect, removed, and ineffective because of the difficulties in establishing basic communication through the barriers of cultural and racial differences. These are the families who do not recognize that they have problems, and do not come to agencies for help.

Family services are supportive to education and employment of youth, the main foci of the CAP. Services will attempt to stimulate and motivate "hopeless" and "helpless" families to use their internal personal resources and the community's social welfare resources to emerge from the cycle of poverty.

The program consists of three levels of service, with each agency subscribing to its basic format. The first level of service is the *Intensive Service Unit*. This is the case-finding operation in which workers without formal social work education will be assigned to a specific geographic area of about ten contiguous blocks. Citizen groups in each community will help to identify areas which are most in need of family services. Workers will move into selected blocks, knock on doors, and become acquainted with the neighborhood people to find those families which could only be reached through aggressive action. The worker, in time, will bring groups of families together to discuss common problems. He will handle some individual cases where minimum or sporadic assistance is

necessary on relatively simple problems. All agency staff, no matter at what level, will be engaged in getting to know the neighborhood and becoming known by working directly in homes and with other agencies or organizations.

Those families identified as needing more sophisticated and lengthy services will be referred to a second level of service within the neighborhood agency. This *Continued Service Unit* will be basically a case-carrying one, where workers, also untrained, but having more potential casework-related skills, will be located. In contrast to that of the case-finding unit, the function of the case-carrying unit is primarily service rather than identification.

A trained caseworker will supervise the case-finding and case-carrying units. The supervisor will also function as a coordinator, maintaining liaison with the other new neighborhood programs as well as with the traditional services.

The problems with which the agencies will deal are universal. They are the common problems that Mary Richmond speaks of and the usual fare of the participating agencies: parent-child relationships; money management; out-of-wedlock pregnancies; need for clothing and household supplies; and so on.

A third level of service is integrated with the family service program, although it is not directly part of the CAP. This level is the *established professional casework services*, rendered by the same agencies. It is anticipated that a substantial number of the neighborhood families will need and be amenable to highly skilled casework counseling not provided through the newly created programs. Such families will be treated on the same basis as other clientele by the participating agencies in their regular programs. This invariably means a waiting period, since our agencies have a standing backlog. The neighborhood agency will provide supportive help, however, until the waiting families are picked up for service.

The Federal Office of Economic Opportunity allocated \$120,000 for the first eight months of operation, ending August 31, 1965. Agencies will build their programs gradually to a projected size of thirty-seven combined case-finding and case-carrying workers, five supervisors, two project directors (one each for the two

largest programs), plus secretarial staff, for which a larger allocation will be sought as of September 1, 1965.

Agency rationale for staffing, with one exception, split naturally between the larger and smaller agencies. The larger ones structured their plans in accordance with the number of workers that would be needed for complete neighborhood coverage. This was determined by examination of census data. These agencies anticipate a total of eleven combined case-finders and case-carriers in each of their programs.

The rationale for the smaller agencies was the size of program that they would feel comfortable with, at least initially. These agencies plan for one supervisor and five combined case-finders and case-carriers in each program.

Part of the commitment to the plan involves submerging the identity of the agencies that administer the programs. In other words, the Catholic Social Service operation will not be known as Catholic Social Service, but will be identified as the family services of the CAP for the Lawrenceville area. Each agency agreed to seek out and to accept all clientele in the neighborhood regardless of their ethnic, religious, or racial identification. Each agency, likewise, will provide a nonsectarian service to the extent possible. This neighborhood identity was felt essential truly to make it a program that would attract all who need services and would repel no one.

I indicated earlier that the case-finders and case-carriers will be workers who do not have formal social work education. Rather, they will be persons indigenous to the neighborhoods served, which is a criterion for employment of personnel established by the Mayor's Committee on Human Resources. This criterion does not, incidentally, apply to the professionals.

The basic salary for indigenous workers with college education is \$5,200 yearly—slightly above beginning salaries of public assistance workers in Pennsylvania. Workers without college degrees will be employed at a somewhat lower salary.

Each agency will be responsible for recruitment and training of its own personnel. The subprofessionals (case-finders and case-carriers) will receive a general orientation to the CAP as well

as specific job training. Workers will undergo a six-week in-residence training period at the University of Pittsburgh, where they will be exposed to the objectives of the CAP, its structure, and operation. The training program will be generalized, also covering sociological and cultural patterns of the poor, acquaintance with community health and welfare resources, and methods of communication. Agencies, on the other hand, will provide their own on-the-job training.

One interesting by-product of the CAP is the development of family service departments in two settlement houses. With only five agencies available for programs in eight target neighborhoods, this would leave three neighborhoods unserved. To fill the gap, one participating agency offered to extend services into an adjoining poverty area.

The absence of enough agencies to serve the two remaining neighborhoods was made known to the coordinating agencies for these areas, which are both settlement houses. Their interest in having a local family service program was strong. As part of their role in developing neighborhood services, they offered to create casework programs, as did the family service agencies. In this way full coverage of family services throughout the poverty neighborhoods is provided.

Discussion of the significance of the program to the field of voluntary casework service is somewhat premature because we virtually have only beginning efforts and no basis in experience for observations related to program development. However, from the vantage of social welfare planning, there are some obvious areas where institutional changes can be expected:

*Clientele.*—By virtue of having a neighborhood location, an aggressive pattern of service, and more fieldworkers, a relatively large number of impoverished families will be served. The goal is to reach all families in target neighborhoods who need help and who are substantially not ready or unmotivated to help themselves. One of the requirements of the EOA is that programs should reach a significantly large number of local poor. While complete coverage of the poor families in Pittsburgh (those with 1959 earned gross incomes of less than \$4,000) will not be



achieved, the eight target neighborhoods contain 58 percent of the poor, or some 25,000 families.

These neglected families, by and large, have not fitted into the usual consumption pattern of social welfare services. Until now the only agencies consistently reaching a massive poverty group have been the public agencies, such as welfare departments and housing authorities. While I do not have facts to back up this observation, it appears that two generally distinct populations have been served by the public agencies and the voluntary agencies. The public agencies, for the most part, seem to serve the unmotivated and helpless poor, while the voluntary agencies are serving the more able and upwardly mobile poor. These distinctions notwithstanding, both groups certainly have in common similar problems of internal disorganization for which family services are needed.

The shift of the voluntary agencies toward serving a massive lower-class clientele is a striking change in service patterns of which the potential impact is tremendous. While nobody would presume successful treatment of all the families, the sole factors of agency availability and desire to serve the impoverished are of themselves important. This effort by the voluntary casework agencies is one that extends, as Mary Richmond declared, our conviction of the worth of common humanity.

*Staffing.*—Professionalized social work has tended to exclude persons without formal graduate training from employment in the voluntary agencies. Agencies interested in maintaining skilled and well-qualified staff have had problems, particularly with perennial casework vacancies. Consequently, they render less than the amount of service demanded by the community.

In the Pittsburgh program it is not possible for agencies to lend more than supervisory staff to the newly developing programs. Participating agencies are required by the EOA to maintain their usual level of expenditures for services, which would prohibit such expedients as transfer of a large percentage of their personnel to the poverty program.

Rather than diminishing or replacing the ongoing programs, agencies are adding the poverty programs as experimental units,

largely unrelated to their conventional programs. Shifts in staff assignments are limited primarily to executive or supervisory personnel so that the conventional services will continue as usual.

Thus, it was mandatory to tap another source for workers. Agencies will use workers indigenous to the neighborhood in quasi or subprofessional positions. These workers are of the poor, and while they do not have the same background of sophistication as the usual trained staff, they bring with them qualities that should be of great value in performing the services that are proposed. One important quality is an ability to communicate directly with the poor. Some previous experiments, such as, for instance, the Mobilization for Youth program in New York City, have used indigenous workers. George Brager, formerly codirector of MFY, reports<sup>4</sup> considerable success with indigenous to the service area. These workers are "in tune" with the lower income population. What possibly may be discovered here, on a large-scale basis, is an unexpected source of valuable and effective workers who could be incorporated in selected assignments in regular agency programs. Voluntary agencies will probably have close interest in following developments in the use of subprofessional workers.

*Agency control.*—In the ordinary scheme of voluntary casework agencies, the responsibility for agency program is vested in the executive and the board of directors. Ordinarily, the board of directors is a highly select and relatively affluent group. Development of policies and making of decisions is a fairly simple and direct process. However, the system in the poverty program imposes a few more complexities upon the methods of decision-making and agency control. This system, while not yet tested, is more indirect and would seem to be more difficult to operate under.

Each neighborhood program will be reviewed and evaluated by a special neighborhood citizens committee attached to the coordinating agency. The committee will represent a cross section of the neighborhood, including residents, businessmen, clientele, and so forth. It will have a watchdog function, to assure that the program is serving the needs of the neighborhood and accomplishing

<sup>4</sup>George Brager, "The Indigenous Worker: a New Approach to the Social Work Technician," *Social Work*, X, No. 2 (1965), 33-40.



its stated intentions (which are yet to be specified in concrete and measurable terms).

In addition to review by the neighborhood committee, the program must also undergo evaluation by the Mayor's Committee on Human Resources, through which funds are channeled. If the agency operating the program also receives funds from the Community Chest, that organization, too, must approve and review the program. While none of these bodies—the citizens committee, the Mayor's Committee, or the Community Chest—has direct control of agency operations, each wields a substantial degree of influence. Furthermore, the program, which is a creation of the participating agency, must also undergo review by the agency's board of directors.

These complicated and diverse forces of influence confuse the lines of responsibility for the poverty program. Satisfying the viewpoints and demands of each will undoubtedly be difficult. Success of the neighborhood programs probably will depend considerably upon a great degree of flexibility of all concerned.

The key new element in this arrangement, however, is the involvement of the client group in the decision-making process for agency programs. This group will now have a more direct voice in determining what kinds of services agencies should have, and where and how they should be administered. The scheme is obviously at variance with the usual pattern of agency control where decisions are made by a group of community-minded volunteers not directly touched by the agency which they serve. The placement of the poor in decision-making positions is a development that community leadership is looking at with great interest, and which certainly will have implications in terms of the conventional well-established programs in the community.

*Funding.*—One other area of significance is money. The EOA calls for Federal participation to the extent of 90 percent of the total program cost. Agency contributions will amount to 10 percent, through furnishing of equivalent amounts of supervision and other administrative expenses. However, the EOA stipulates that by July 1, 1966, matching of funds must be made on a fifty-fifty basis by the Federal Government and local communities. A very

real and crucial question arises as to continued financing after that time.

Our agencies in Pittsburgh agreed to participate in the program with the understanding that they could not possibly continue beyond June 30, 1966, under the current provisions of the law, unless some other sources of funds are developed by that time, or extensive Federal funding continued. Should the experimental program be successful, then the effect of reduction or withdrawal of funds and subsequent discontinuance of the program could be drastic, particularly for the families served. On the other hand, the deep convictions that agencies have about their regular programs would preclude, at this juncture, adjustments in internal priorities that would result in sacrifice of present services for a venture that remains highly speculative. The resolution of this dilemma will have to be worked out within the forthcoming year.

One obvious solution, of course, is continuation of Federal financing at the same high level. Congress is now considering a bill to extend the 90 percent-10 percent provisions for another year. However, if we look into the history of comparable Federal crash programs, we find that they have not continued *ad infinitum*, and other provisions were made to extend, in a more organized fashion, the experimental programs that had vital value to the nation. Perhaps, if and when the whole range of community action programs does demonstrate their value, a more permanent and stable arrangement for their support and auspices will be created.

It is premature to reach broad conclusions about casework agencies in relation to the poverty program, primarily because there is almost no experience. However, it is satisfying to see voluntary casework agencies take part in this great experiment and challenge. It is particularly satisfying because, of all the different areas of social work, casework services have become the most stabilized and professionalized. Now that they are in the poverty program, agencies are eager to reexamine their established ways of operating. They are eager to rededicate themselves to serving community needs.

The decision by these agencies to enter into the poverty program is a fundamental one. It was an interesting decision, based

largely on the question of whether it was possible to remain outside this new program. Ordinarily, such a decision would be based on the desirability of getting into it.

The pressures from the community, that is, from the major voluntary planning and funding organizations, favored participation. Internal pressures, both philosophical and practical, were also operative. One pressure was the anticipation that other poverty services would generate a deluge of referrals which the agencies were not structured to handle in large volume. Maintaining a six-month waiting list would not provide an answer. So, from a practical standpoint alone, entry into the program was a matter of meeting community responsibility.

The poverty program is creating a different blend of agency services in the community. The submerging of agencies into a total community effort does have great promise. Concerted work on the problem of poverty is the only way that this war can be won in the 1960s. In Pittsburgh we take pride in our voluntary case-work agencies which want to be in the center of change, more important, they are on the battlefield, creating this change.

# *Strategies for Research in Public Welfare Administration*

by SAMUEL FINESTONE

THE EXPERIMENTAL WELFARE CENTER PROJECT is a demonstration-research project jointly sponsored by the Columbia University School of Social Work and the New York City Department of Welfare. Financing was provided by the Federal Bureau of Family Services upon application of the New York State Department of Social Welfare.

The project has just completed its first year of full operation, after about a year and a half on a small-scale pilot basis and is being supported for an additional year.

Essentially, the project is a piece of action research dealing with an experiment in planned change in an urban public welfare bureaucracy. Its primary objectives are the development, evaluation, and general utilization of a series of interrelated innovations in an operating welfare center. The project aims at the more effective achievement of welfare goals envisaged in the 1962 amendments to the Social Security Act; the secondary objective is feedback to the School's curriculum in the form of knowledge pertaining to public welfare, organization and change theory, and clients.

The experience of the project suggests that there are four major aspects to be considered in demonstration-research involving planned organizational change: (1) the conceptual orientation, which includes the way the organization is perceived and the variables selected for experimentation; (2) the action program, which involves the actual content of the demonstration effort; (3) the administrative strategy of change efforts; and (4) the

evaluative design constructed to test the consequences of the experimental program.

These four aspects constitute the framework of the project, and it is important to note that in actual operation they must mesh. Also, the fact that the project is conducted through a preexisting administrative structure rather than one especially set up for the purpose of the experiment, as is characteristic of a field experiment, influences each of the four components.

*The conceptual orientation.*—The welfare center in which the project is located does not vary significantly from other welfare centers in New York City. It can be seen as a system of interrelated parts, including its organization, its program, the way roles are defined for interaction among staff and between staff and clients. But this is an incomplete way of viewing the center. In the first place, it is a subsystem of a larger organizational system, the New York City Department of Welfare. And since the department is characterized by a high degree of centralization, and low local welfare center autonomy, it is necessary to include this larger organizational system in the orientation to the project.

In addition, the welfare center serves a particular geographical area, made up of a number of neighborhoods. These include a network of public and voluntary social agencies, on the one hand, and lay groupings on the other. At least potentially, then, the welfare center is related to surrounding community systems. Thus, even though the project is located in a particular welfare center, it is necessary to consider the larger department and the local community contexts.

We need now to look at the general tasks of any organization, at how these are handled in the Department of Welfare and the welfare center, and where potential difficulties lie. It is this analysis which enables us to get perspective on where and how to direct change efforts.

Any organization defines its objectives, or has objectives specified for it. Moreover, these objectives are often potentially conflicting. In our case, there are objectives of eligibility determination and of service and rehabilitation. The difficulty is that without special attention, the eligibility objectives tend to swamp the service and rehabilitation objectives.

Large organizations set up separate divisions to carry out specialized functions, and then face the problem of coordinating them. In our case, one difficulty is that mechanisms do not exist whereby the bureaus of public assistance and child welfare may give coordinated attention to the social problems of family organization and child care. The consequence is that discontinuities in service are created.

Organizations devise programs which are more or less efficient and effective in carrying out their objectives. A review of the programs of the department suggests that while desirable programs of service have been devised, there are factors which limit the use of these programs by staff and clients.

Every organization creates a decision-making structure, and in so doing faces the dilemma of avoiding an overly diffuse or overly centralized pattern in the effort to combine both uniformity and flexibility in application. For a variety of reasons, and not all by choice, the Department of Welfare pattern is a highly centralized one so far as special decisions are concerned, and this creates problems in lessened flexibility and staff initiative.

Every organization creates control mechanisms so that assigned tasks will be carried out as intended. The difficulty here is to avoid the extreme where the time devoted to maintaining and following up controls competes heavily with the time devoted to carrying out the necessary tasks. There are reasons, many of which lie in the accountability of the city department to the state, and the state to the Federal Government, for the disproportionately heavy emphasis on control as against program activity.

There is another consequence, not necessarily intended, of the way the control system is set up. If the controls, in practice, actually do guard most heavily against errors in unwise giving, then necessarily errors of the opposite kind, that is, of unwise withholding, tend to increase. This does seem to be a problem of the control system, and the conclusion is that structural ways to achieve a desired balance in the control of both types of error need to be devised.

Every organization defines tasks necessary to carry out its objectives, and allocates these tasks to different categories of staff. Difficulties arise in relation to the adequacy of the defined tasks for



carrying out objectives, and the wisdom of the way in which the tasks are allocated. In the Department of Welfare, for example, a great many clerical tasks are assigned to social service personnel, with consequent diversion of time from people to paper, development of procedural rather than service orientation, staff disaffection, and lack of full efficiency in the performance of clerical tasks.

To prepare staff to carry out assigned tasks, organizations plan and carry out more or less effective programs of staff induction and training. This suggests that the Experimental Welfare Center Project has to consider staff training to complement and support its other activities.

The final point in this analysis is the character of the relationship to the local community. In the case of our local welfare center, we find that relationships to the social agencies and to the general citizen group are tenuous and unplanned. Considering the importance of coordination of services, of planning for new community services, and of the need for community understanding and support, these are difficulties which require attention.

Now we are in a position to present the conceptual framework of the project itself, as related to this analysis. In an action project, we are confronted with a host of variables. Perhaps they can be separated into three groups. There are, first of all, the kinds of results we hope to achieve—the output variables. There are also the changes we hope to introduce—the input variables. Finally, there are a number of variables which we can do nothing about. These might be called the “stay-put” variables. It is indeed necessary to make this last group as explicit as the first two; for they form a context necessary for understanding what is going on.

In the Experimental Welfare Center Project we are not changing the basic means test character of public assistance, or the system of category relief, or the level and type of the public assistance budget, or the Federal-state-city structure of accountability, or the civil service structure. Finally, we are not changing the general social opportunity structure in the community at large. It may well be that whatever changes we make in the system will not achieve the desired results; not only because the input is weak, but because the context factors, left unchanged, may be more powerful in their influence on desired results than the input factors.

What are the desired results or outputs?

1. Quantitative productivity; for example, an increase in the number of interviews per caseworker and per client
2. Qualitative productivity; for example, increases in services and improvements in client-worker relationship
3. Staff orientation; for example, improvements in job satisfaction and perceptions of function
4. Client outcomes; that is, objective change in the situations of clients and their handling of them.

We come now to the changes which the project is introducing, the input variables. These include: decentralization of decision-making on special grants and services; shifts in task allocation; modifications in the control system; systematic staff training; establishment of relationships to the local community; minor modifications in the service program; and attempts at coordination of bureau activity. These variables are embodied in concrete action programs, to be described later.

It may be asked whether the Department of Welfare, as the agency concerned with change, had any share in determining the kinds of innovations introduced. Indeed, it would have been impossible to proceed unless this were true. Agency staff had prepared a long list of suggested changes, and the Commissioner of Welfare had approved general directions for change laid out in the original proposals. It was the task of the project director, working in close partnership with the welfare center administrator, to select priorities for attention, to develop some additional suggestions, and to carry on continuous clearance as specific plans for change were formulated.

*The action program.*—The action program consists of a number of experiments rather than of one particular innovation. The rationale for this decision is that it is very difficult to achieve the desired outcomes for staff and clients with any single innovation, and only the introduction of a number of interrelated changes can have the necessary impact. This decision, although necessary, creates problems in the sheer complexity of operation and the difficulties of precise evaluation of the contribution of any particular innovation to the results achieved. The character of the innovations is determined by realistic expectations of what resources are



available to the Department of Welfare, rather than by an ideal set of conditions. Thus, while it is not unrealistic to plan demonstrations that involve modest increases in the quantity and quality of staff, it is unrealistic to demonstrate that desirable effects can be achieved with double the amount of staff, most of whom are professionally trained. These conditions are not realizable in the foreseeable future. Thus, the possibilities of widespread utilization are negligible even if the demonstration proves out.

The innovation that affects the largest number of staff in the welfare center is the experimental work system designed to change the basic ways of working of the operating units, each of which consists of a supervisor, five caseworkers (not professionally trained), and a clerk, handling some 300 cases. The system has just been put into operation throughout all twenty-five units in the welfare center, after a number of months in which it was developed, refined, and pretested on a pilot basis in four units. It is, however, necessary to test on an office-wide basis before we can judge the feasibility and results sufficiently to warrant recommendation of the system for the entire department. The experimental work system does *not* involve additional staff. It does involve a shifting of a great many clerical tasks, mainly the preparation of forms, from the caseworkers to the clerk. It also provides that decisions on special grants and services, formerly made in the central office or at higher supervisory levels in the welfare center, shall be made within the welfare center. Additionally, workers are scheduled to do field visiting on two designated full days of the week, and to go directly from home to field rather than clocking in at the center. Finally, emphasis is put on caseload planning; which is to say the selection of cases that require more attention than others, and a plan of differential activity. This last feature is to be buttressed by a staff training program in which parallel content will be covered with all the supervisors and with all the caseworkers. It can be readily seen that what is involved is reallocation of tasks, decentralization of decisions, increase in field time, and educational reinforcement of changes in staff orientation. The whole system is designed to replace the current style of work in which clerical and

procedural activity predominate over goal-directed activity addressed to the differential needs of families.

The principle of shifting clerical tasks from social service to clerical personnel is also applied to other supervisory personnel, called administrative assistants. In an experiment now completed, two of four such supervisors have been replaced by clerks, and a division of function has taken place. Here, too, the idea is that by changing the functions of social service workers, their orientation to, their behavior in, and their satisfaction with, their roles will also be changed.

A second major action experiment is the Special Services Unit. This unit works with selected problem groupings of clients rather than with the usual wide range of problems; and the caseloads are smaller (thirty to thirty-five instead of sixty). Currently, the families of unemployed youths who have dropped out of school are being made up into special caseloads. After these have been set up, a second type of caseload will be created, made up of isolated aged adults with health and social problems. The supervisor is a graduate social worker; and the fact that she has been assigned to a unit in the welfare center rather than to a special post elsewhere in the Department of Welfare is unique.

The rationale for the Special Services Unit is that problems which are ordinarily submerged in the mass of things to be done become visible. The nature of the problems can be better understood, and the necessary services can become more explicit and coordinated. Also, we hope, this specialized experience can eventually be fed back to the total welfare center.

A third action program is the development of a community organization function in the local welfare center. A graduate social worker, trained in community organization, has been part of the project from the beginning and has functioned as an assistant to the administrator for community organization. With this position, studies of the neighborhoods served by the center have been made available to administrator and staff, lines of communication with other social agencies in the community have been opened up, some beginnings of coordinated planning for new services in the community have been made, and consideration is be-

ing given to the involvement of citizens, including clients, in advisory groups for the welfare center. The general purpose of this community organization feature of the project is to close the gap between the welfare center and the neighborhoods in this territory of service, and in this way to increase both community understanding of public welfare and community impact upon it.

An exploration of the feasibility and value of services to clients in groups, to supplement the services given on an individual basis, is also under way. We hope to establish groups as part of the intake process in which clients apply for assistance. Our rationale here is that knowledge of the ways in which the department works, and the legitimate expectations of service, may become more available to applicants in a group situation, where they are less powerless, than in the individual situation.

We hope also to establish groups of girls who have dropped out of school. Our observation that these girls are socially isolated to a marked degree suggests that group services may be helpful. Finally, we hope to work with groups of ADC mothers to help them sort out the many problems which accompany fatherless homes.

There are other major experimental programs we hope to get into—one involving the coordination of child welfare and public assistance services; another involving development of an experimental student training program.

A few observations on the strategy of planned change may now be made. Without explicit consideration of the issues involved, the entire change enterprise may be jeopardized.

Power to make decisions and to affect the outcome of change efforts is held in different ways by different levels of staff. In our particular effort, we can identify the commissioner level, the bureau director level, the intermediate level between bureau and welfare center represented by field consultants, the welfare center administrator, and finally the line personnel in the welfare center. Our strategy has involved stressing two relationships as focal: the commissioner's office, and the welfare center administrator.

Obviously, it is essential to get agreements on the change program and agency support at the highest level, and to get these as explicitly as possible, even though it is not possible to anticipate

all the variations which may arise. Thus, general decisions on the direction of the project are made through relationships between the School (carried by the dean's office, and the project director) and the commissioner's office.

The closest working relationship is between the project director and the local welfare center administrator. Actually, the administrator is a full partner in the project. He shares in the formulation of the innovations, commits his staff to the various experiments, and participates in the administrative assessment of their effectiveness. Although he continues to be a Department of Welfare center staff member, he also teaches at the School. This partnership is crucial to the project. Without it, it is doubtful that the project could continue at all, even if decisions at the top of the organization were favorable.

This important role is not usual for an administrator, since in the Department of Welfare he is generally directly responsible to the bureau director's office. These dual relationships, both to the bureau director and to the project and the commissioner's office, pose some understandable difficulties which periodically emerge and are periodically resolved by improvements in communication.

As for bureau level and the intermediate field consultant level, the principle we would stress out of our experience is that relationships have to be worked out so that the decisions on changes are reserved for the two focal relationships mentioned above, but that constant sharing of developments is maintained with other levels. In a bureaucracy, the absence of knowledge about what is going on below creates resentment and threat. Even carbon copies of all materials constitute a helpful kind of communication and dilute, to a degree, expected difficulties. Knowledge, in a bureaucracy, is one aspect of power.

The welfare center staff also require careful attention. All sorts of misconceptions tend to arise unless there is careful and repeated interpretation. Not only interpretation, but actual involvement in the form of staff committees to assist in developing and evaluating the results of experiments are necessary. There needs to be sensitivity throughout to the reactions and concerns of staff.

In the long run, unless the innovations take hold among the staff, they will be for nought.

We have found, too, that it is necessary to pay a good deal of attention to the installation of new operating patterns by means of special training. Moreover, unless there is continued monitoring, there may be a continuation of old patterns rather than a genuine introduction of the innovations.

Phasing of program activity is also important, we have found. Thus, the first stage of the experimental work system was devoted to trying out the separate components in several units, where the difficulties in operation could be identified and refined and a preliminary evaluation made. This was followed by a period when the elements were combined and tried out in four units, with other units selected as a contrast group. The third phase, recently begun, involved experimentation in all twenty-five units in the welfare center. The reason for this is that operational problems in a total welfare center are quite different from those which appear in a small-scale pilot activity. We are indeed finding this out. We would like to involve another welfare center in a trial of this system as a transitional step toward department-wide installation. These phases take a considerable amount of time to be sure, but perhaps they are justified by the greater chance of widespread utilization.

It may be instructive to mention a few of the problems which affect the course of change efforts in as complex an agency as the Department of Welfare. One is that whenever there are conflicts among the various staff levels, this tends to affect the course of the project. The most dramatic example of this was the strike in the Department of Welfare, which lasted for a whole month and created unusual work conditions for another month. This actually delayed the course of the project for two months. During this period, the project staff had to conduct itself in a way which would not alienate it either from the administration or from the staff of the center.

There is much more that could be said about the change process. We have learned, sometimes the hard way, about the forces in agency and staff which facilitate or pose obstacles to organizational



change; about the advisability of planning a step-by-step strategy in phasing effort at change; and about the important role of community factors in influencing change within the organization, and so on.

We see the objectives of research in our demonstration effort as focusing mainly on evaluation of innovations, with a secondary objective of summarizing the knowledge that emerges concerning clients and organizational characteristics and behavior. Perhaps the inclusion of this secondary objective is influenced by the joint department and university auspices of the project. Conceivably, in a demonstration where university auspices are not involved, there might be even less attention to nonevaluative research objectives.

We must immediately make the observation that in contrast to the field experiment where the structure is expressly set up to test hypotheses, a demonstration is set in a preexisting structure, to which the project, including its research component, must be adapted. The amount of experimental control of variables is therefore more limited, and the evaluative design more informal and varied.

The fact that there is not one program to evaluate but a number of them creates several problems. One is the overlapping of effects, which makes it difficult to ascribe results to the individual components of the project. For example, if there are improvements, it is not possible to separate out with rigor the discrete contributions of the elements in the experimental work system and of the supporting staff training program. It is theoretically possible to construct a matrix of all possibilities one by one and in various combinations, but this is not feasible in a demonstration. It may be possible in a field experiment.

Also, because of the number of experimental programs, choices must be made in allocating research effort so it may be used most economically. Thus, a limited number of the most efficient indices rather than all the possibly useful indices must be selected for measurement and evaluation.

Another consequence of the number of experimental programs is that they vary with respect to the kinds of designs for evaluation, from those which are basically descriptive, or are based on system-

atic administrative judgment, to those which can be more formal and approach rigor. Examples of three research designs illustrate this variety of approach. The examples also illustrate the role of administrative judgment and the use of available administrative indices as well as the use of instruments especially constructed for the purposes of evaluation.

The administrative assistant experiment is the simplest to discuss. The approach involved the study of tasks now carried on by supervisory social service personnel and the application of administrative judgment as to which tasks were essentially clerical. This determination was followed by revision of the staffing pattern (that is, substitution of two clerks for two of the social service personnel), and the reallocation of tasks according to their nature. Evaluation has realistically taken the form of a complete listing of the classified tasks, plus systematic observation of the presence or absence of backlog or complaints as indices of quantity and quality, plus a specification of the savings in cost and personnel. This is an administrative strategy of evaluation.

In marked contrast is the evaluative design proposed for the Special Services Unit. Here we are concerned with comparing client outcome between experimental and control groups. To do this, instruments were constructed for special interview and case reading and administered to every relevant family in the welfare center. There will then be a random assignment of half these families to the experimental program while the other half will be left in the regular units. After nine months, there will be a second period of data gathering. An analysis of gains will be made for both the experimental and the regular group, and the results compared. It can be seen that this design is a fairly traditional experimental one. It may be noted that analysis of the interview and case reading data will provide not only evaluative data but also general material on the nature of the problems and the services given.

The third example is the use of data routinely maintained for administrative purposes in order to test the consequences of the experimental work system. Thus clerical error rates, proportion of time spent in the field, number of field visits, number and dollar value of special grants, number of case closings coded for reasons

of positive change, absence and turnover rates among investigators, and other data are available through existing administrative reports and may be compared before and after experimental installation. Of course, these indices need to be supplemented by special studies and instruments, such as morale inventories before and after installation.

We have found that action research in a public welfare bureaucracy is a very complex affair. We do not yet know whether the combination of the limitations in our approach and the sobering realization of the importance of the variables that are untouched by the project will lead to significant results.

Certainly, there is need for experimentation of a more fundamental kind in which the variables now left untouched, such as the basic means test approach, would be manipulated. In the meantime, however, perhaps there is usefulness in less ambitious approaches.

The innovative tasks involved in relating a public bureaucracy to its objectives for people and not to the procedures which have grown up over the years appear to me to be central to our industrialized, bureaucratized society. Perhaps small changes, plus a great deal to be learned, make the game worth the candle.



# *Administrative Leadership in Complex Service Organizations*

by HERMAN D. STEIN

THERE WAS A STORY in the newspapers not long ago<sup>1</sup> of the visit to the United States of a British expert in playground design who described school and other public playgrounds in the United States as "an administrator's heaven and a child's hell." The playgrounds, she said, had clearly been built primarily for the ease and economy of their maintenance, and to forestall insurance claims for accidents. They had not been built for the true needs of the children who were supposed to use them. Whether the criticism is fair or not for playgrounds, the vulnerability of complex service organizations to the ailment of turning administrative simplicity into a goal in its own right, whatever the results for consumers, is omnipresent.

Most of us in social work accept the fact that our activities in service agencies *are* to be primarily directed to service, whether in the form of care for hospital patients, treatment of children in child guidance clinics, or help to the economically disadvantaged in the public assistance agency. We are not always as mindful of the fact that as we evolve our administrative structure and patterns, some of this evolution can tend to be in the direction of making it easier for ourselves administratively, to the detriment of our presumed service function.

It has been repeatedly observed<sup>2</sup> that as certain key features of bureaucratization set in, such as an impersonal social climate, pro-

<sup>1</sup> New York Times, May 16, 1965, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> See Earl Rubington, "Organizational Strains and Key Roles," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, IX (1965), 350-69; Herman D. Stein, "Administrative Implications of Bureaucratic Theory," *Social Work*, VI, No. 3 (1961), 14-21.

lification of rules, and status barriers between professionals and clients and between different levels of staff themselves, the total administrative system tends to work more to the advantage of the experts than to its clients. The very features of bureaucracy that can give it the capacity to produce services economically and efficiently, that maintain stability, that provide role security for employees and objective criteria in the treatment of the consumers of its services, can develop a system related primarily to the interests of its staff, particularly its experts, rather than to the interests of its clientele. (A caricature of this phenomenon is the ironic statement sometimes heard in schools, including schools of social work, that "We could run a wonderful school here if it weren't for the students.")

The movement in hospital care for the mentally ill from the custodial institution to the therapeutic milieu provides one of the most vivid illustrations both of the need for loosening up, in the interests of patients, the rigidities of structure and process that emerge with overbureaucratization, and the strains that can develop when the loosening up goes so far that the essential structural requisites of complex formal organization are weakened. Two analyses of processes of debureaucratization in organizations designed for in-patient treatment provide valuable insights. One<sup>3</sup> deals with a specific treatment center for alcoholics; the other,<sup>4</sup> with hospital treatment of the mentally ill generally. In both, the debureaucratization consisted of reducing status differences between staff and clients, a flattening of the hierarchical authority system, opening up new channels of communication between staff and patients, providing smaller, decentralized units for care of patients, and promoting an informal, friendly social climate.

These are all moves reflecting the premise that the traditional custodial state hospital type of institution, one prototype of Goffman's<sup>5</sup> profiles of "total institutions," essentially was designed for administrators and staff, not for patients. Both analysts

<sup>3</sup> Rubington, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> William R. Rosengren, "Communication, Organization and Conduct in the 'Therapeutic Milieu,'" *Administrative Science Quarterly*, IX (1964), 70-90.

<sup>5</sup> Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions," in *Asylums* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961), pp. 1-125.

agree that in the situations studied, debureaucratization resulted in a much greater orientation to patient care. The very words changed in the mental hospital from the formal, staff-oriented "going on ward rounds" to the informal, client-directed "chatting with patients."

The strains for patients ease, but in their place come strains for staff. The more personalized relationship of staff to patients, the greater personalization of relationships among staff themselves, the more amorphous systems of communications and control, and reduction in defined roles of authority, apparently create new pressures. As Rosengren put it, the small, nonbureaucratized, total-treatment type of hospital becomes "total" for staff instead of for patients.

While these analyses are directed primarily to consequences in changes of patient care systems, they indirectly reinforce certain other principles. One is that the way to prevent bureaucratic strains in the interests of better service to clients or patients is not to make the organization totally nonbureaucratic and loose in structure and process, but to modify existing conditions and introduce new structure and process focused on patient interests. It is true that nonbureaucratic systems can provide greater latitude for innovation, individualization, professional self-fulfillment, and ready adaptability to change than can more complex formal organizations. They also, however, provide conditions that can make for instability, role confusion, and interpersonal tensions which, if they become severe, can militate against the interests of clientele. The importance of demonstrating positive affect in interpersonal relationships in the nonbureaucratic structure is such that it may be said that "when it is good, it is very, very good, but when it is bad, it is horrid." There can be a price paid for drastic debureaucratization.

The directions for solutions in complex service organizations, one may suggest, are not in substituting role diffusion for role specificity, nor in minimizing hierarchical levels of responsibility, but rather in developing a balance between those elements of structure and process conducive to rational management of the organization, and those elements essential for optimum client serv-

ice. Decentralization is a case in point. Decentralization may be necessary to attain service objectives in certain kinds of institutions. The smaller size and greater face-to-face relationships permit more individualization and the kinds of treatment relationship that may be necessary. But rational administrative objectives, if the decentralized unit is a unit of a larger organization, would require consistency of policy and procedures regarding such elements as staff roles and communication channels. One can avoid overloading the decentralized unit with ritualistic procedures unnecessary to its proper functioning, but one does not remove role requirements, or hierarchical lines of responsibility. It is not easy to have one's bureaucratic cake and eat it too, but the attempt should be constantly made.

The prime principle is to make sure that the service organization exists for service, not for ease of administration. The one is a goal; the other, a means. Minimizing the strains inherent in bureaucratic structure requires approaches consistent with such rational formal organization—that is, consistent with bureaucracy—and central to these approaches is defining responsibility within the structure for determining that all administrative means are related to the ends of service and do not become ends in themselves.

Where research and training are included with service systems, it is not easy to keep these three objectives in balance, under the best of circumstances. There are, however, certain preconditions for maximizing the reciprocal reinforcement of these systems, and reducing conflict and waste of effort. One is for the organization to have its priorities clear for each system. What is it *primarily* in business for, what secondly, and what comes third? The budgetary and nonbudgetary investments should reflect these priorities. The systems should be differentiated, which is not to say that individuals may not be located in more than one system; but the service, teaching, and research systems as such should be differentiated, not only in such respects as personnel, space, and equipment allocation, but also in terms of administrative responsibilities and, most important, in terms of objectives and expectations.

Organizations geared primarily for service can develop far

greater leadership potential with the addition of teaching and research functions, if such preconditions exist, and if there is a pattern of communication and influence among the three systems so that they are individually reinforced in function and effectiveness, and together create an increasingly potent and effective service operation.

The relationship between the needs of the individual and the needs of the organization has come into increasing prominence as a concern in the development of organizational policy as well as in organizational analysis. Thus, Argyris stresses that "the basic impact of formal organization is to make the employees feel dependent, submissive, and passive, and to require them to utilize only a few of their less important abilities,"<sup>6</sup> and calls for a better "mix" of individual needs and organizational demands. Marshall Dimock similarly stresses the incompatibility of bureaucratic structure and personality requirements.<sup>7</sup>

I do not feel that the conflict is inevitable, if thought is given to utilizing the capacities of people in organizations to the fullest, and individualizing them. Fundamental as the problem is for the mental health of our working population, it is equally significant for the welfare of the organization itself. The waste by organizations, in industry, government, and the voluntary sector, incurred by the failure to utilize the human potential, is prodigious.

The essence of the dilemma is that since bureaucratic organizations tend to enhance role specificity, definite and circumscribed job demands, and provide rewards for conformity alone, they may not tap the special abilities, imagination, or views of employees that can well serve the interests of the organizations themselves as well as enhance the sense of individual worth and self-respect of employees.

Several approaches can be taken to reduce this potential conflict. One concerns the planned involvement of personnel in organizational decision-making. Some years ago the term "demo-

<sup>6</sup> Chris Argyris, *Personality and Organization* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 75, and *Interpersonal Competence and Organizational Effectiveness* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, Inc., 1962), pp. 38-54.

<sup>7</sup> Marshall E. Dimock, "Bureaucracy Self-examined," in Robert K. Merton *et al.*, eds., *Reader in Bureaucracy* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1952), pp. 397-406.



cratic administration" was popular to connote the proper recognition of all individuals in administration. In its simplistic form, however, this concept is antithetical to hierarchical organization, placing an excessive egalitarian demand on policy involvement without appropriate responsibility and competence.

The concept of "relevant participation"<sup>8</sup> meets this problem by identifying which kinds of policy and operational problems require the participation of which kinds of personnel. In its fullest expression, this concept would invite the participation of every member of an organization, no matter how huge the organization is, in contributing to issues in which their special experience and competence are relevant. A management specialist put it as follows:

The participative principle . . . gives recognition to people as human beings—individually and in their group relations—and it brings dignity and meaning to their jobs. It can tap the creative imagination and inventive ingenuity for which we Americans are justly famous. It can banish fear and dependence by giving the members of the organization an opportunity to exert control over their own destinies and to acquire genuine understanding of what are usually felt to be mysterious and arbitrary management actions. It offers, *par excellence*, a way to encourage the development of genuine personal responsibility among all members of the organization, and with it, the freedom which is always lacking when control is centralized.<sup>9</sup>

It should be emphasized that the concept of "relevant participation" includes the participation of clientele, or consumers of service, precisely where and to the extent such participation is relevant. Client participation has been largely neglected, or has been occasionally utilized to give the illusion of involvement without the content of the participation taken seriously.

A second approach involves continuous assessment of special strengths as well as weaknesses of personnel, relevant to the organization's needs, irrespective of the specific occupational roles assigned.

<sup>8</sup> Stein, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Douglas McGregor, "Changing Patterns in Human Relations," Society for the Advancement of Management, Cleveland, 1950 (mimeographed); excerpt reprinted in Robert C. Sampson, *The Staff Role in Management: Its Creative Uses* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 85.

Some years ago, when I was serving as consultant to a middle-sized manufacturing organization, we introduced a policy of having every evaluation made by a superior of a subordinate include consideration of anything the employee was particularly good at or interested in, as well as what he seemed to do poorly. Supervisors were evaluated not only on the same basis, but on the basis of whether they did, indeed, present an appropriate assessment of positives and negatives in their subordinates. There is more to this approach than meets the eye. It took over a year to be understood and to take hold through all levels of the organization from the chief executive down. Permit me to give one illustration of how it worked, at its best:

One twenty-four-year-old employee had been hired as a supply clerk in the central office, where a variety of goods was received that were utilized by designers in fashioning and testing eventual designs for mass production. The clerk's supervisor recommended his dismissal on the basis that his handwriting on shipping orders was often illegible, he was occasionally careless in filling out the form, and he was sometimes away from his desk, just "floating around."

The supervisor was asked by *his* superior whether there was anything the clerk was good at, or interested in, and just why and where he was "floating around." This exploration, which was becoming routine in the organization, led to the information that the clerk spent most of his time, when he was not engaged in receiving and checking supplies, with the designers. When with the designers he asked a variety of technical questions, and inquiry with the designers, in turn, elicited their respect for his quick intelligence and capacity to see the relationship between a handmade design and the sequence and cost of steps in manufacturing.

In this industry, few talents are more precious than the capacity to visualize production processes on the basis of a design. The clerk was reassigned as an assistant in the design section, and served as liaison with the factory. He became more technically qualified, developed his natural conceptual talent, and rapidly moved to important responsibilities. He became a valuable asset to the company, and rose to an executive level within a few years. His handwriting, of course, remained poor.

This was a success story. Others were less dramatic, and some were not successes. Nevertheless, it was possible, in an organization of a thousand people, to individualize. Through a recognition of

individual assets and liabilities, made by supervisors throughout the chain of command, the principle was maintained of utilizing and building on the strengths of people, building jobs around these strengths wherever possible, and not insisting that employees only correct their weaknesses, particularly where these could not be altogether overcome. Both the organization and the individual benefited in ways both expected and unexpected.

The illustration is not from social work, but the concept is hardly less applicable.

A third approach involves flexibility of assignments and testing of capacities, such as the deliberate rotation of tasks within the organization. Such an approach can prevent monotony where the tasks are routine, increase flexibility in the utilization of personnel, and provide a broader perspective on their jobs by individuals seeing another aspect of the organization's effort, from the perspective of changed responsibility. Of course, this should not be overdone to the point where there is discontinuity, group instability, or personal hardship.

Whether it is these or other approaches that are utilized, the essential concept is that there should be a deliberate attempt to maximize individual capacity and ideas. An innovative, forward-looking organization does not develop imaginative ideas at the top only, but in its administrative process, particularly through supervisory channels, helps make it possible for relevant ideas, perceptions, and information to flow freely through all channels of communication, up, down, and sideways. Again, it should be borne in mind that the kinds of approaches referred to, for effective employee utilization in bureaucratic organizations, are themselves bureaucratic in character—they are stated policies, to be pursued throughout the organization, and not vague sentiments to be applied here and there on an individual, use-your-own-judgment basis.

Herbert A. Simon has recently summarized<sup>10</sup> the developments in decision-making theory, research, and practice. He stresses the growth of quantitative decision-making tools in busi-

<sup>10</sup> Herbert A. Simon, "Administrative Decision-making," *Public Administration Review*, XXV (1965), 31-37.



ness, the growth of computer methods in decision-making, and the fact that laboratory experimentation in decision-making, following the computation schemes initiated by Bales and Bavelas, has become a thriving enterprise. From this growing body of tested assumptions will come further insights capable of translation into practical terms in our large service agencies. Indeed, some of these directions in the theory of rational choice are finding their way into use now.

Both in the newer decision-making theory and in the older, traditional view of administrative planning, however, the emphasis has typically been on intraorganizational decision-making and planning, as if the organization were a closed system. Of course, it is not, and least so with respect to organizational plans and decisions that are designed to shape its future. There is an external environment to every organization, with which it interacts. These interactions may be conceptualized into major systems for any one organization, affecting: (1) support and maintenance of the organization; (2) administrative policies; (3) structure; (4) operating function.

Leadership within and by an organization requires the capacity of the organization to shape its own destiny to a significant degree, if not entirely. In turn, this necessitates a full understanding of the systems of interaction in which the organization is involved. The components in each of these systems may overlap, but their force will be different. A political special-interest grouping may have considerable influence in the systems of financial support and policies, but have relatively little influence in systems that affect administrative structure or operating function. Agencies that make and receive referrals may have considerable influence in operating function, but little in economic support.

In the case of large, national agencies with decentralized units, the same concepts apply, whether one is referring to the total agency or treating each of its components as an organization in its own right. In the latter case the central headquarters and the other components of the national agency become part of the organization's significant external environment.

No organization operates in limbo, and the more an organiza-

tion has become large, complex, and bureaucratized, the more does it have interdependent relationships, not only with other organizations but with nonorganizational forces. One of the reasons a large, bureaucratic organization tends to be stable and long-lived is that by the time it gets to be large and complex, it is part of a network of other organizations and major groupings which have investments in the organization's survival. The consequence, however, as in all interdependent relationships, is some degree of loss of autonomy.

One of the most common illusions of personnel in large agencies, even in professional social work agencies, is that the executive, or the board, is really free to make decisions of any kind that affect the interests of the organization. The fact is that there is always a range of constraints on decision-making and agency planning, stemming from the extraorganizational environment as well as from internal organizational considerations.

If the agency does not have a strong planning arm, projecting its aims for the short- and long-range future, it can become simply the passive resultant of external forces shaping the nature of its financial support, its policies, structure, and operative function. Just as there is the illusion of the staff below of the powers of the executive above, so there is often the illusion on the part of those in administrative authority that they are making genuine decisions, guiding the destiny of their organization, when they are merely doing what has become unavoidable in the wake of prior decisions made by other organizations or groups.

For an organization to have optimum control over its own destiny, and particularly where it is concerned with organizational innovation, anticipation of change, and adaptation to change, clear location of responsibility is needed to provide accurate assessments both of the internal organizational system and the extraorganizational systems.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> In this general connection, one should note the increasing attention being paid to interorganizational analysis in the administrative literature. We are still at the level of guiding concepts, however, not of tested research. See Sol Levine and Paul E. White, "Exchange as a Conceptual Framework for the Study of Interorganizational Relationships," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, V (1961), 583-601; Eugene Litwak and Lydia F. Hylton, "Interorganizational Analysis: a Hypothesis on Coordinating Agencies," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, VI (1962), 395-420.

Should an organization such as the Veterans Administration move into different and closer relationships of service for out-patient clients with community agencies, for example, new systems of interactions would develop. Not all such relationships may evolve the way decision-makers in the Veterans Administration or the other agencies concerned may have intended them to be to begin with. Different interests and organizational requirements will have to be negotiated. The direction of such relationships should ideally have been thought through by the initiating agency in advance, along with consequences that could be anticipated and ways of reacting to them. This is the kind of planning responsibility that, however much it should draw on relevant participation of staff at all levels for ideas, reactions, and information, in the last analysis has to be centralized.

William Foote Whyte<sup>12</sup> observes that in the early history of human relations research in industry, with the fascination of the discovery of the "informal organization" and the fact that people were people even when they were working, little attention was given to formal organization and to the impact of the environmental forces that shape systems of behavior within organizations. To this note may be added that the observation that those of us professionally reared in the sciences and professions of human behavior find it congenial to attribute good and bad quality of administration to the personality and intellectual attributes of those in administrative authority. The news of human factors in organization was not exactly a revelation to us, therefore, although we could not perhaps have systematized our premises. We are, however, less inclined, by training, to concede to structure and process the force which they have, unless we make a special effort to do so.

In complex service organizations, the necessity to be highly cognizant of the repercussions of such structure and process is great indeed. For leadership to be developed within and by such organizations, a perspective is needed which takes into account the per-

<sup>12</sup> William Foote Whyte, *Man and Organization* (New York: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1959).

sonality and group relationship dimensions on the one hand, and the structural, systemic factors on the other.

Stress has been placed here on three dimensions of analysis, with deliberate compensatory emphasis on the structural attributes. All of this discussion is related, however, to one basic objective—how our service organizations, in an increasingly complex environment, can do the best job for those they serve and bring out the best in those they employ.

# *Using Data Processing to Analyze Worker Activity*<sup>1</sup>

by ROY P. WAKEMAN

TO DATE, THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION has relied exclusively upon written records to keep account of clients, their problems, and the service provided by workers. While the keeping of narrative, process, and summary records has served a very useful purpose—and probably always will remain an intrinsic part of the social work education process—the recent and burgeoning development of high-speed computers has introduced a new means for recording social work activity.

Since September, 1962, the Seattle Atlantic Street Center (ASC) has been conducting a five-year research-demonstration project to evaluate the effectiveness of assertive social work with acting-out youth. Service is provided by three trained social workers, each of whom sponsors two groups of nine boys.<sup>2</sup> The workers meet with each group weekly, see boys in individual, peer group,

<sup>1</sup> The material used here is based upon the experience of the entire staff of the Seattle Atlantic Street Center in conducting a five-year research-demonstration project entitled "Effectiveness of Social Work with Acting-out Youth." The project is funded by Public Health Service Research Grant No. 1-R11-MH 882-A1 from the National Institute of Mental Health, by United Good Neighbors Fund of Seattle and King County, and by the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Methodist Church.

<sup>2</sup> The basic research design of the project uses the traditional experimental-control approach. From the total of 421 boys who entered two junior high schools in central Seattle (a high-delinquency area) in September, 1964, 126 boys were selected who evidenced a propensity for acting-out behavior. Fifty-four of these "high-risk" boys were assigned randomly to an experimental group to receive service from the ASC; the remaining 72 were assigned randomly to a control group and are not served by the ASC. Experimental boys who are lost from the project (because of moving out of the project area, refusing to accept the service provided, and so on) are replaced randomly from the control group.

and family interviews, conduct parent group meetings, and work with any other persons who play significant roles in the lives of the boys.

Early in the project, it was decided that workers should record uniformly on the five theoretical areas upon which the project is based,<sup>3</sup> and also that their recording should be readily accessible to scientific analysis.<sup>4</sup> Efforts were made to locate a recording system which would meet these basic qualifications; since no such prototype was found, the staff began to develop a system which would accommodate the essential information.<sup>5</sup> What began as an experimental venture has now become a highly useful tool for the social work researcher.

The ASC Recording System uses numerical codes to represent predetermined statements about the *worker-client contact*, about *client problems*, and about *worker response to client problems*. Recording on four items about the worker-client contact provides basic information on: (1) the date of contact; (2) the person contacted; (3) the initiator of the contact; (4) the place of con-

<sup>3</sup> The theoretical rationale of the project is based on five causative theories of acting-out behavior: (1) anomie theory: see Emile Durkheim, *Suicide, a Study in Sociology*, George Simpson, ed., John A. Spaulding, trans. (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951); Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (rev. ed.; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957); (2) differential association theory: see Edwin H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1947); (3) community disorganization theory: see Clifford Shaw and Henry D. McKay, *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927); (4) family disorganization theory: see Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor Glueck, *Delinquents in the Making* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952); F. Ivan Nye, *Family Relationships and Juvenile Delinquency* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958); and (5) self-concept theory: see George H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*, Charles W. Morris, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

<sup>4</sup> A case in point is the Cambridge-Somerville Project which utilized some 22,000 single-spaced pages to record client and worker activity. See Gordon W. Allport, Foreword to Edwin Powers and Helen Witmer, *An Experiment in the Prevention of Delinquency; the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. xiv. It was not until fourteen years after completion of the project that the McCords and Zola dug through this mass of material to retrieve data essential to understanding what the workers did on the project. See William McCord, Joan McCord, and Irving K. Zola, *Origins of Crime: a New Evaluation of the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

<sup>5</sup> Recognition must, however, be given the recording system used by Rehabilitation Codes, since their working system was objective proof to the ASC staff that recording by code was a definite possibility for the field of social work.



tact; and (5) the duration of contact. Information about client problems is recorded via 146 diagnostic statements formulated from a base of five causative theories of delinquency; recording also is done on client norm violations in school and in the community. Worker response to client problems is recorded in code from a list of sixteen social work interventive techniques.<sup>6</sup>

All recording is done in numerical code on 8½" x 11" recording forms. At the end of each calendar month, information from the recording forms is key punched and processed through a computer yielding: (1) a report of activity for each case for that month; and (2) a summary of activity during the month for all cases assigned to each worker. As optional features of the program, it is possible to obtain: (3) a cumulative summary of activity for each case from time of intake to date; and (4) a cumulative summary of activity for all cases assigned to each worker from time of intake to date.<sup>7</sup>

These print-out summaries are used by each worker and by supervisory and administrative staff to evaluate current and ongoing case activity. Eventually, when the project reaches its final stages, these summaries will contain considerable data to answer such questions as: (1) Who received the service? (2) Who initiated the service? (3) How much service was provided? (4) What was the locus of service? (5) What problems were manifested by, and confronted the clients? (6) How did workers respond to clients' problems.

The statement that the ASC Recording System is a highly useful tool for the social work researcher is premised on the fact that recording by code—unlike conventional narrative, process, and

<sup>6</sup>For a more comprehensive understanding of the ASC Recording System see "Seattle Atlantic Street Center Recording System," Section I, "A Rationale"; Section II, "Recording Form and Coded Recording Manual" (Seattle: Seattle Atlantic Street Center, 1964; mimeographed). See also James R. Seaberg, "The Feasibility of Case Recording by Code," publication in *Social Work* forthcoming.

<sup>7</sup>Computer program ASC-2 was developed by Thomas Steinburn, Research Director, Atlantic Street Center, in conjunction with Wayne Albin, Research Assistant, Atlantic Street Center.

It should be noted that a considerable amount of data analysis can be accomplished easily without use of high-speed computer. See Eugene S. O'Neill, "Analysis of the Seattle Atlantic Street Center Coded Recording System" (Seattle: Seattle Atlantic Street Center, 1965; mimeographed).



summary methods—imposes a predetermined, standardized system for data collection upon the worker. This fact has several important ramifications for social work research.

When the social work researcher assumes an active role, along with the practitioner, in selecting, categorizing, and codifying the specific items and statements to be included in a coded recording instrument, he is assured that recording will be done, if applicable, in those areas designated for scientific study. Furthermore, by having all workers record on all cases in uniform, numerical codes, the researcher is relieved of the onerous, time-consuming task of looking for bits and pieces of pertinent information which are (or may not be!) scattered throughout voluminous process or narrative case records. Coded recording also eliminates the need for extensive and costly poststudy classifying of lengthy process records.

Because coded recording is transferable directly onto punch cards for computer processing, social work research is greatly accelerated. Detailed analysis or descriptive data about an agency's service can be obtained within a few days following submission of data for processing. For example, to obtain monthly summaries on each of fifty-four boys and monthly summaries on three separate caseloads of eighteen boys at the Atlantic Street Center requires only: (1) four to six hours to key punch and verify data; (2) two hours to prepare data and program decks for the computer; (3) one to two minutes of computer time to process and print the data; and (4) two hours to separate and bind the print-out sheets.

Another important factor is that key-punched data can be stored on computer tapes and thus be readily accessible for any further analysis, comparison, or study beyond that completed during the course of a project. This storage factor is particularly significant because the data generated by a coded recording system accumulate at such a rapid rate that it is impossible for any one researcher to analyze thoroughly and report all the possible findings during the short life of a research project. Furthermore, as social work researchers write new and better programs for computer processing, old data from tapes can be used to yield new facts about social work practice.

To be highly useful in social work research, a coded recording instrument should be designed around a well-thought-out and explicitly stated philosophy of agency service. As this fact becomes clear to a staff during the process of adapting a coded recording system, considerable thought and effort are expended to discover exactly what their philosophy of service is; and so workers, supervisors, and administrator come to grips with their own personal rationale, ideas, and goals about providing a professional service to their clients. Although the immediate results of such a process do not appear as data gathered during the course of a research project, such a thinking-through process does stimulate the awareness, refinement, and organization of professional knowledge by staff persons, thereby enhancing their own professional growth and, ultimately, the growth of the profession's fund of knowledge.

The experience of practitioner and researcher both working together results in greater knowledge about the complex nature of human social problems and also promotes a healthy and mutual appreciation for the knowledge and skills which each specialty possesses for coping with these problems. As more of this kind of close, collaborative effort between social worker and researcher is undertaken, the gap between practice and theory in the behavioral sciences gradually will be narrowed.

Relating these ideas specifically to our topic brings forth the awareness that coded recording provides the social work profession with a method for describing some aspects of its service in such an orderly and precise fashion that they become readily available for objective, scientific analysis. Certainly, such analysis will more clearly identify our working techniques and will help to refine and organize our growing body of professional knowledge.

The above remarks all have been directed toward the use of coded recording in social work research. Yet because the majority of social work agencies are not research-oriented it seems prudent to examine the implications of coded recording for the practice-oriented agency.<sup>8</sup>

*Advantages of recording by code.*—The primary advantage of

<sup>8</sup> See Roy P. Wakeman, "Problems Encountered in Adapting a Coded Recording System" (Seattle: Seattle Atlantic Street Center, 1965; mimeographed).

the ASC Recording System for the administrator of a service-oriented agency is that it provides him with accurate head-count information about the service his agency is providing. The system generates current and cumulative data about how much service (number of contacts) is provided for whom, by which means (individual interviews, phone calls, correspondence, and so forth), and the amount of time required of workers to provide the service. Just having information about the number of contacts per case, or per client system,<sup>9</sup> and about the amount of time it takes for workers to make such contacts enables the administrator to assign caseloads which are equitable among all workers and realistic for each individual worker.

Because the data are always available and current, the administrator is kept informed of any gradual or sudden changes in agency services provided by all workers or by any one worker. With such objective information at hand, the administrator is in a defensible position to make any necessary changes in staff or caseload assignments, or to recommend basic changes in agency function to the governing board. The systematic recording on the first four items of the ASC Recording System will provide more factual and reliable data about services than most agencies have been able to gather with any other type of record-keeping system.<sup>10</sup>

In comparison with process or narrative recording, a coded system also reduces by approximately 75 percent the time spent in recording,<sup>11</sup> markedly decreases the size of individual case records, eliminates the need for a large clerical staff and for expensive dictation equipment, and establishes a standard, unified form of agency record-keeping.

*Agency conditions necessary for change.*—Whether they be students, new graduates, or seasoned professionals, social workers everywhere are faced with the problems of what information about their clients and their services to record, how to record it, and why they record it. Their motivation to explore these issues is high;

<sup>9</sup> The term "client system" refers to the principal client and all other significant persons associated with him (parents, siblings, teachers, neighbors, and so on).

<sup>10</sup> The first four items of the Atlantic Street Center's recording form are: (1) date; (2) person contacted; (3) mode of contact; and (4) duration of contact.

<sup>11</sup> Seaberg, *op. cit.*

but workers must be given the license, encouragement, and time to evaluate their particular requirements of a recording system.

It is the responsibility and role of the administrator to create an agency atmosphere conducive to such exploration and creativity by the staff. The administrator has another very important function too. He must establish a philosophical framework within which the service of the agency is to be carried out, and he must be sure that the staff clearly understands this philosophy. For, knowing the basis, boundaries, and goals of agency service, the staff then can feel free to evaluate and to define its requirements of a recording system.

*Selection of diagnostic categories.*—The real challenge in adapting the ASC Recording System begins when workers take on the task of selecting diagnostic categories to include in their recording instrument. If there is any single step in the process of adapting a coded system that is most apt to create confusion, uncertainty, and antagonism among professionals, it is this one; for workers tend to view problematic behavior through the cloudy biases of their own personal experiences, varied levels of academic training, vague theoretical notions, and differential professional experiences. At the Atlantic Street Center, the staff went through seemingly endless discussions and heated debates about many ideas and issues which all seemed so clear before beginning the task of defining and categorizing them. Hardly a week goes by without someone still raising a question about diagnostic categories, and so a special notebook is maintained in which workers note their questions as they encounter them. These questions are then brought up in weekly staff meetings for discussion and staff consensus.

Paradoxically, it is while struggling with this same troublesome and perplexing task of establishing diagnostic categories that the greatest professional growth, knowledge about theory, and understanding of clients' problems are acquired by the workers. Almost every aspect of our professional training, knowledge, and skill is challenged, critically evaluated, but ultimately strengthened during the process of defining diagnostic categories.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area Development Project is in the process of developing a coded recording system. Stan Badlak,

Theoretically, the ASC staff thinks that the diagnostic categories and statements of a coded recording system must: (1) be tied soundly to the theoretical rationale which guides and defines the kinds and limits of service an agency provides; (2) be broad enough *in toto* to encompass the range and type of client problems served by the workers; and (3) be clearly stated and defined in order to make each diagnostic statement mutually exclusive from every other statement.

While the staff felt fairly confident that they were able to meet the first requirement of formulating diagnostic categories compatible with their philosophy of service, they were not able to satisfy completely these other two requirements.

Not every type of deviant or problematic behavior observed by the ASC workers can be recorded using the present ASC recording instrument. This may be so because the diagnostic categories are too limited and thus do not encompass the entire gamut of human behavior explained by the theories the recording device is based upon; or it may be so because the theories used do not explain every type of deviant or problematic behavior that workers observe. Whatever the reason for this situation, the ASC workers do find it necessary, at times, simply to note in longhand whatever behavior cannot be codified using the present recording device.

In addition to being unable to reduce all observed problematic behavior to predetermined diagnostic categories, they also had problems with the language of social work because our profession has not yet developed a universally applicable and acceptable vocabulary for describing the problems with which it deals.

Within the broad diagnostic category "association pattern," for example, are the specific diagnostic statements "withdraws from others" and "relinquishes autonomy with others." The problem

---

Treatment Supervisor for the project, stated in a letter, dated April 14, 1965: "... we are attempting to tie in the specific diagnostic categories (or problem areas) to the various areas of the Geismar-Ayres Family Functioning Scale. We are doing this by holding meetings with our five family workers two full mornings each week. Process recordings and tape recordings of interviews are presented by workers so that we can pull out specific problems—not only as presented in the actual situation covered by the recording, but of situations which are brought to mind by them. I'm finding that these group sessions are in themselves invaluable as a method of staff training, development and supervision."



then developed was to define what was meant by "withdrawing" and by "relinquishing autonomy" so clearly that workers would be able to use these diagnostic statements uniformly and without confusion. In many instances, like this one, they were unable to define terms precisely, and so it became necessary to construct hypothetical case examples to depict meanings which could not be reduced to semantic definitions. Yet, even with such examples, some terms commonly used by social workers remained so abstruse that it was necessary to establish arbitrary, simple, and almost artificial rules, which, when applied to given diagnostic statements, help the workers distinguish one kind of problematic behavior from another.

The theoretical rationale of an agency provides helpful guidelines for selecting diagnostic categories, but presently there are no firm guidelines for deciding how many diagnostic categories and statements should be used in a coded recording system. The Vancouver Area Development Project is in the process of formulating individual diagnostic statements within nine broad categories. The Atlantic Street Center uses seven such categories, containing 146 individual statements. Experience indicates that such numbers are within manageable limits, but no one can state exactly the optimum number of diagnostic categories and statements to be used in a coded recording system.

Process, narrative, and summary forms of record-keeping generally include information about the strengths and about the weaknesses of clients. In developing the ASC Recording System, consideration was given to using statements, or coded symbols, which also would generate positive and negative data. However, because of the research needs of the project, it was decided to focus recording solely upon the negative and problematic situations facing clients. Thus, the ASC recording instrument contains statements only about clients' problems, not about their strengths. This decision has upset many who assume that the workers ignore the healthy, adaptive, and positive strengths of their clients. This is not so. ASC workers are cognizant of, do support, and build upon strengths. Yet, the very fact that so many practitioners have become upset attests to the profession's concern about workers' responses to clients.



The staff at the Atlantic Street Center share this concern especially because they found the whole area of interventive techniques—the working tools of our profession—to be poorly defined and in need of careful evaluation and study.

*Delineating and defining interventive techniques.*—A major theoretical problem is whether our interventive techniques actually are the “methods” of social work or the “goals” of social work. For instance, consider “environmental manipulation.” The term itself implies that we try to make some changes within the client’s environment; thus, we have accepted the notion that manipulating the environment is one of the methods used to enhance the social functioning of the client. While it may be valid to accept “environmental manipulation” as being a method, the ASC staff chose to classify it as a goal of social work—a goal that *may* be achieved by using the methods of “giving information” about, or “interpreting” the client’s needs to others so that they will afford him needed opportunities or more satisfying relationships to improve his social functioning.

The underlying problem seems to be that at some point within the social work process, methods may become goals, and goals, in turn, may become methods. This is a crucial theoretical quandary which confronts workers when delineating and defining the interventive techniques they use to help their clients.

The other major problem which is brought into sharp focus when listing interventive techniques occurs because of our professional vocabulary. All workers are familiar with the terms “confrontation,” “interpretation,” “clarification,” and so forth. There seems to be a given exactness or certainty about these terms, and so we use them freely within the profession. Yet, in developing the list of interventive techniques for use in the ASC recording instrument, workers frequently disagreed, for example, about the meaning of “clarification” and “interpretation.” The workers explored the literature to resolve this dilemma and were confronted with an almost hopeless problem of semantics and ambiguities. Often such terms are mentioned in the literature without precise definitions; and many times, when they are referred to in case examples, it is most difficult—in fact, impossible—to know which technique the

author meant to label as "clarification," and which technique was meant to be "interpretation." Faced with the necessity of having to list interventive techniques, but having a literature which generally has not isolated and clearly defined such techniques, presents a real dilemma in constructing a coded recording instrument.

Although the listing of interventive techniques does raise some critical, theoretical issues which the profession needs to consider, and even though the literature in this area is not particularly helpful in defining many terms, three practical and expedient steps can be taken to facilitate the task of listing interventive techniques: (1) eliminate those "methods" which obviously may be "goals"; (2) condense overlapping methods to their more basic and elementary functions; and (3) establish definitions for those techniques which are to be included in the recording instrument.

High-speed data processing *can* be used to facilitate basic social work research. The development of a computerized coded recording system by the Seattle Atlantic Street Center attests to this fact.

Coded recording provides the researcher with readily accessible data about the worker-client contact, client problems, and worker response to client problems. Computer processing summarizes and analyzes current and cumulative data about agency services.

The process of developing a coded recording system is not easy; a number of problems are encountered which severely challenge our present fund of knowledge about social work practice and theory.

Although recording by numerical code is still a new concept in social work, early experience with the ASC Recording System indicates that it has important advantages for administrators of practice-oriented agencies.

# *Changes in Values Concerning Sexual Behavior*

by *ELIZABETH A. FERGUSON*

ARE WE WITNESSING A REVOLUTION in sexual standards, particularly on the part of our young people? Certainly the public press would have us believe so. College administrators, clergy, sociologists, J. Edgar Hoover, family court judges, and social workers manifest concern for what most of them see as a growing problem—the deviation of more and younger people from traditionally accepted sexual mores. How can we explain and what do we mean by a “social revolution”? Does contemporary sex behavior constitute such a revolution? If it does, what is the evidence and what possibility is there of predicting what the future may hold?

A “revolution” presupposes a departure from accepted standards. Standards describe behavior that is expected and approved by members of a society. In order to make social life possible, each member of a society must be able to anticipate with a fair degree of accuracy the behavior of others. These expectations are then sanctioned by the society, departures from them are disapproved, and they are taught to the young as the behavior they must adhere to in order to be socially accepted. Thus, ideally, these expectations become internalized in the character of the mature adult and govern much of his behavior fairly automatically. Such internal controls are the only way to make life in a democratic society possible; the alternative can be seen in the external control of the police state. Since these expectations represent outgrowths of past experience they tend to be conservative and to stress what has been. If, then, they become too much out of step with current

reality, they tend to lose some of their compelling force. There is increasing pressure to deviate from them. As more and more people deviate, the internalization of the standards becomes more difficult. "Do as I say, don't do as I do" has never been a very firm basis for the inculcation of any directives. A period of mounting unrest ensues, in which the gap between theory and practice widens, and increasing alarm is felt about what all this may be leading to. However, since society cannot survive without expectations for the behavior of its members, new expectations inevitably develop. It is after the old norms have lost some of their effectiveness and before new ones have solidified that we experience what can be considered a "revolution." The situation is dramatically evident in the newly emerging nations of the world, where the old mores of family, tribe, and village have been disrupted, and new ones appropriate to industrialism, urbanism, and nationalism have not yet appeared.

Such a revolutionary period is an uncomfortable time for everyone who must live through it. The older members of the society, who have made the older norms part of their character structure, feel threatened by what seems to them destructive behavior on the part of those younger members in whom the process of socialization either did not include the older norms, or did not succeed in implanting them firmly. The younger members of the society feel aggrieved that no clear-cut patterns are presented to them, and resent what seems to them the hypocrisy of saying one thing and doing another. When anything as basic to social life as the sex standards of a society are undergoing fundamental change, it is a painful period for young people, their parents, educators, and social agencies.

And yet, the history of Western civilization indicates that there have been profound changes in sex standards, and that new ones have always replaced those that became inoperative. Periods of great strictness are followed by periods of relaxation, which are, in their turn, succeeded by renewed strictness. One need think only of the alternation between the frankness of the Elizabethan era in England, its contrast with the Puritan period, which in turn was followed by the boisterous Restoration, by the prudery of the Vic-

torian age, and the emancipation of the 1920s with its loud discussions of free love and companionate marriage, to predict that the current freedom will yield, in its turn, to some newer controls, and not, as predicted by some alarmists, to abandonment of all sex standards. But it is hard to maintain a perspective on one's own times, when society continues to profess old norms as virtues long after they have ceased to be functional, and when, by implication, failure to adhere to the old standards is unvirtuous. Attempts to turn back the clock are likely to be fruitless, since the past is no longer workable. Standards which were appropriate for a settled, rural, agricultural country have been rendered obsolete by mobility, urbanization, industrialism, and the profound changes in the status of women in contemporary America. Should we not, then, be devoting less energy to mourning the past and viewing the present with alarm, and instead analyze what data we have, look for indications of the emergence of new norms, and devote some effort to reinforcing any of them which seem to have potential value?

There is no need to look very far for ample evidence of deviation from norms of the past, although if the Kinsey report is to be believed, it is somewhat less recent than some critics would imply. You will remember that the Kinsey figures on older women indicate that from 35 percent to 56 percent of them acknowledged extramarital sex behavior in their youth.<sup>1</sup> Helen Harris Perlman cites findings by Gilbert Youth Research that one in every four girls between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two has had premarital intercourse.<sup>2</sup> Winston Ehrmann<sup>3</sup> and Clark Vincent<sup>4</sup> are only two of the many authors whose recent research confirms the increasing numbers of pregnant brides, and the incidence of premarital sex experience. The recent marked rise in venereal disease, particularly in younger adolescents, is an indirect indication,

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Kinsey, *et al.*, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1953), pp. 298, 339.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Harris Perlman, "Unmarried Mothers," in Nathan E. Cohen, ed., *Social Work and Social Problems* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1964), p. 271 n.

<sup>3</sup> Winston Ehrmann, *Premarital Dating Behavior* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1959).

<sup>4</sup> Clark Vincent, *Unmarried Mothers* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).



as is the rate of illegitimacy, whether estimated in terms of the ratio of illegitimate births to total births, or the ratio of illegitimate births to unmarried females of childbearing years. Vincent states that the latter tripled between 1938 and 1958.<sup>5</sup> To these figures should be added some estimate of the number of abortions since many of them terminate illegitimate pregnancies.

There is heightened concern on the part of college administrators, women's magazines, and the general public. Dana L. Farnsworth, Director of Harvard Health Services, comments on the greater pressure brought upon the colleges by student demands for more freedom, and states:

The sexual behavior of college students may be changing in the direction of practices formerly attributed to members of lower socioeconomic groups . . . not only is there thought to be a qualitative change in sexual practices but also an acceleration in such behavior. What was thought to be characteristic behavior at 18 or 20 years of age may now be observed in persons 16 to 18 or even younger.<sup>6</sup>

Helen Southard, basing her comments on discussions held with more than a thousand young people aged thirteen to eighteen, states that "well over half of these young people believe that sexual relations before marriage are quite all right provided there are no babies."<sup>7</sup> The New York *Herald Tribune* ran a series of articles in December of 1964 including excerpts from interviews with 105 students, from 16 leading colleges, in which these students were asked whether or not they approved of premarital sex. Forty-two percent approved regardless of how permanent the relationship might be; an additional 13 percent approved if the couples were engaged.<sup>8</sup>

To secure firsthand data on premarital sexual attitudes and behavior, a questionnaire carefully designed to permit total anonymity was administered to a group of thirty-five junior and senior college students. The frankness and interest of these students are gratefully acknowledged. No claim is made for statistical validity,

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Dana L. Farnsworth, "Sexual Morality and the Dilemma of the Colleges," American Orthopsychiatric Association, New York, 1965; mimeographed.

<sup>7</sup> Helen Southard, "Clues from Queries about Sex," National Conference on Social Welfare, Atlantic City, N.J., 1965; mimeographed.

<sup>8</sup> Terry Ferrer, *Our Colleges: the Crisis on Change* (New York: New York *Herald Tribune*, 1965).



and these figures must not be taken as representative of any other college population. Nevertheless, some importance must be attached to the fact that of the total, seventeen, 48.5 percent stated that they had engaged in premarital intercourse, and all but one of them more than once.

In the light of the widespread incidence, and approval, of premarital sex experience, can we continue to treat young people who engage in it as having abnormal personalities? Helen Harris Perlman has been one of the very first writers to call attention to the fact that we have always considered the operation of socioeconomic factors in the illegitimate sex behavior of the Negro woman, but we have considered the middle- and upper-class young woman involved in illicit sex as a deviant acting out her inner conflicts by this means.<sup>9</sup> If we pursue the matter of a revolution in sexual behavior logically, should we not examine the sociocultural pressures on all young people to see if causal factors are not present which would help us interpret the rising incidence of premarital sex without the necessity for leaning heavily on psychoanalytic explanations of unresolved oedipal conflicts, self-punishment for forbidden sex fantasies, and the like? As Harvey Cox, a leading Protestant theologian, puts it:

We must admit that we have created a set of cultural conditions in which sexual responsibility is made exceedingly difficult. . . . It is strange how even people who see most clearly that crime . . . narcotics addiction and poverty are largely structural problems still interpret the increase in premarital sexual experience as a breakdown in personal morals.<sup>10</sup>

What are some of these cultural conditions?

There is increasing pressure from parents and from schools for earlier and earlier maturity. "Going steady" in the first grade, the preteen bra (cup size AAA), and evening dances for ten-year-olds are among indications that pressures both from parents and from peer groups have pushed the problems of early adolescence back into the latency period. When this is combined with parental anxiety about popularity and parental insistence that their child have a busy social life, the child is likely to develop standards

<sup>9</sup> Perlman, *op. cit.*, pp. 286 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Harvey Cox, "The New Protestant Debate over Sex," *Redbook*, October, 1964, p. 105.

which will not threaten his popularity. The "other-directed" personality of David Reisman has less to guide him in making a wise choice whether to postpone or gratify sexual impulses. Highly sophisticated sex information and manuals of procedure are available. The stimulating effects of advertising, movies, television, and books are obvious. As Cox says:

We have thus fashioned for unmarried young adults a particularly unfortunate combination of emotional environments. They are constantly bombarded—through clothing styles, entertainment, advertising and courtship mores—with perhaps the most skillfully contrived array of erotic stimulants ever amassed. Their sexual fears and fantasies are studied by motivational researchers and then ruthlessly exploited by mass-media hucksters.<sup>11</sup>

The children who have grown up in the wartime and postwar prosperity of our industrial cities and residential suburbs have had access early to the things their parents may have had to wait for until adulthood. Trips abroad, or to Fort Lauderdale, cars, smoking and drinking, generous allowances, have made sex almost the only adult privilege not freely offered to adolescents. When this situation is combined with the permissiveness of parents who are afraid to thwart their children because of mistaken ideas about child rearing, and the lack of supervision from parents preoccupied with their own concerns, it is no wonder that sex becomes a means by which to express independence and maturity. In their eagerness to be loving parents, too many have overprotected their children from the consequences of their own errors. They have paid for, and hushed up, automobile accidents and vandalism, have rationalized unwillingness to take summer jobs, and have allowed the child from the child-centered home to enter the world thinking he will find it child-centered. No wonder Bushnell can describe the contemporary college student as "self-confident, self-satisfied, and self-centered."<sup>12</sup> After permitting self-indulgence in almost every other area of their children's lives, parents are then shocked and punitive when they find that their children have been experimenting with sex. Southard comments that their concern is

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 57.

<sup>12</sup> John H. Bushnell, "Student Culture at Vassar," in Nevitt Sanford, ed., *The American College* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962), p. 508.

more likely to be for outward consequences than for a child's feelings. "Many worry about loss of virginity in a physical sense but few consider the feelings a girl may have for years after casual sexual encounters. . . . Education on anatomy is more common than education on feelings, but this latter is what young people need and want."<sup>13</sup> One cannot avoid the impression that it is the getting found out which horrifies adults, rather than the behavior itself. Children, for their part, knowing that the adults who are scolding them condone similar behavior in themselves and their peers, feel victimized.

The colleges have found themselves in difficulties. Caught between the highly vocal demands of students for freedom in every aspect of life, and their responsibilities *in loco parentis*, colleges have often sidestepped the issues. In an effort to encourage responsibility among students, colleges have often thrown too much of a burden on students unprepared to make reasoned decisions. Many observers feel that firmer limit-setting by colleges would be greeted with relief by students troubled by too many demands. Farnsworth<sup>14</sup> comments that the setting of some limits not only helps the student to make mature decisions but may reassure him by making it evident that someone cares what happens to him. The university's primary responsibility is the development of the whole personality of the student, and the provision of opportunities for fostering maturity in personal and social as well as intellectual aspects of that personality. While most educators are agreed that colleges cannot legislate morality, they cannot ignore it and should not sanction situations in which mature decisions are more difficult to achieve. The discussion at Harvard in the fall of 1964 about visiting hours for women guests in student bedrooms will be remembered. After all, as Dean Robert E. Fitch of the Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley, has pointed out, "when a healthy young man entertains a healthy young woman privately in a bedroom, what, under the circumstances, really is mature, adult behavior?"<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Southard, *op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> Farnsworth, *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> Robert E. Fitch, "The New Protestant Debate over Sex," *Redbook*, October, 1964, p. 106.

The thirty-five students who participated in my survey were asked what college policies they would consider effective in lowering the incidence of premarital sex. While twenty-four (69 percent) of them felt that this was not the college's business, they were agreed that some policies would be effective. The three most often cited were policing of area motels, adequate chaperoning of fraternity house parties, and banning liquor on campus. Some differences were observed between the two groups of students. Those who had not had premarital experience (Group A) felt more strongly than Group B that such matters were not the business of the college (78 percent as contrasted to 59 percent). A possible clue to this difference in attitude may be that the great majority of Group B had their first sex experience during the years they were students (88 percent between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one). Were they perhaps more aware of the extent to which college policies or the lack of them may affect the incidence of sexual activity?

In an effort to see to what extent the older morality was effective, students were asked to check possible reasons for the choice they made. Of the students who had not had experience (Group A), two thirds (29 percent of the total sample), cited opposition on moral grounds as the most important reason; the next most important reason was fear of possible pregnancy; the third was uncertainty about the boy's feelings. Fear of being expelled from school was not checked by anyone. For 28 percent, the situation had not arisen. These respondents were asked whether their decision was final or might be changed under other circumstances. Only 22 percent indicated that it was final, and 24 percent indicated that they expected to engage in sexual intercourse before marriage. Thirty-nine percent said that if they could be sure of the partners' feelings, they would. Only one student checked that the availability of contraceptives would have changed her earlier decision.

Group B indicated definitely that they had not felt bound by moral restrictions. Sixty-five percent felt no moral disapproval of premarital sex, and had done as they wished. The next most important reason checked (25 percent) was that this was an expres-

sion of maturity and independence. Three girls (18 percent) checked "I did not intend to, but got carried away." Of this group, 82 percent stated that they did not regret the experience. The frequency of the occurrence was asked. Sixty-five percent had had more than one experience with the same partner, and 29 percent had had more than one partner. In regard to contraceptives, 47 percent had used none; 53 percent reported that the man had used contraceptive measures, and in one case, the girl had used pills on a subsequent occasion. Both groups were asked whether they believed the ready availability of oral contraceptives would increase the incidence of premarital sex experience. There were no significant differences between the responses of the two groups, both indicating that "some" increase could be expected.

Both groups were asked their opinions about the extent of premarital sex among their friends, and the two groups gave different estimates. Group A (without experience) underestimated as compared with Group B; in the former, 61 percent and in the latter 94 percent believed that it was extensive. On being asked to hazard a guess as to the percentage among friends, Group A had a median of 30 percent with a range from 2 percent to 90 percent; Group B had a median of 60 percent with a range of 20 percent to 99 percent. The two groups agreed, however, that boasting about imaginary sex experience by the girls of their acquaintance was relatively rare.

We must not overgeneralize from these data, but they tend to support other indications that sex education in terms of the older morality cannot solve the problem. The old norms, obviously, no longer control the thinking and the behavior of young people. The conviction that how they behave is their own business, and the lack of guilt about behavior of which their elders disapprove, bear out that we are indeed in a sexual revolution. The often-expressed fears in regard to AFDC mothers and other welfare recipients—that making contraceptives readily available will undermine morals—overlooks the fact that the morals are already well undermined.

Is there evidence of the emergence of new norms? I think there is, and that we would do well, in our families, our colleges, and



our social agencies, to try to recognize and reinforce some of them. There is the expressed desire of young people to be "mature" and to value maturity as a personality attribute. Helping them to see that rushing into premature intimacy is immature will be more effective than condemning it as immoral—the young simply do not see it as such and anyway would rather be called "immoral" than immature. The importance of the relationship between the partners is viewed as highly important, both by those who do and those who do not engage in premarital sex. In Group B, it will be remembered, two thirds had had some kind of continuing relationship with only one partner. Premarital sex is definitely not synonymous with promiscuity. They want to be sure of "his feelings" as well as their own. This may represent a positive which should be utilized by those who deal with young people. Farnsworth comments on the idealism of contemporary college students. This may be apparent in their relationships with other students as well as in their enthusiasm for the Peace Corps and for civil rights. It shows in their disapproval of exploitation of one sex by the other, and their reluctance to use sex as a means of holding on to someone who is slipping away.

There is evidence, also, of a franker and healthier attitude toward sex as part of the whole person, and sexual attitudes as consistent with other attitudes. This is certainly better from a mental health standpoint than the compartmentalizing of sex as a shameful part of life—an attitude which was often found with the older morality.

But young people, with limited experience of life, need to be able to discuss their uncertainties and their decisions with older, more experienced people. The problems of communication between parents and children, between students and faculty, and between students and administrators, are very real. Southard underlines this in her summary of the opinions and inquiries of over a thousand teen-agers:

There is great ignorance about sexuality, including both psychological and physiological aspects; communication will easily occur between young people and adults if the climate is right, for young persons are serious about the subject; there is a widening breach between parents



and young persons since feelings are not easily discussed; at junior high ages there is a preoccupation with matters of pregnancy; adults do not encourage the "not nice" questions and so cut off their learning; young people have a very individualistic approach to values; sex is not a separate subject but is tied in with the whole of life, including a good balance between dependence and independence, responsibility and impulse control, loving and being loved, good self images, curiosity about knowledge and values in life.<sup>16</sup>

Standards of morality and maturity are legitimate issues for discussion in the college situation, as well as with younger age groups. What kind of sex attitudes do students hope to find prevalent when their children are growing up? Since by definition "premarital" implies that they plan to marry some day, what relevance does their premarital conduct have to the chances of a successful marital relationship in a few years? The ability to make wise choices—in a career, in selecting a mate, in setting life goals—is more important than any particular physical act. The emergence of norms which stress decision-making, mature acceptance of the consequences of decisions, respect for one's own and others' personalities, and the essential interdependence of all members of a society in what has been called the Atomic Age, the Age of Anxiety, and the Age of Alienation, seems to offer more promise than punitive and regressive attempts to enforce old standards in a period of revolution.

<sup>16</sup> Southard, *op. cit.*

# *Planners' and Consumers' Priorities of Social Welfare Needs*

by LUDWIG L. GEISMAR and  
BRUCE W. LAGAY

PRIORITY-OF-NEED STUDIES, through the utilization of rational decision-making and democratic process on the community level, seek to order welfare planning in terms of need for services as perceived by local welfare leaders. As a corrective to planning based largely upon influence, power, tradition, tenure of service, and so on, priority studies represent a significant landmark in the evolution of welfare planning in the United States.

Although the intent of priority of need studies is unmistakable, their actual use has posed a great many problems and raised the question as to whether the goals of the studies have ever been achieved. Samuel Mencher, in a trenchant analysis of priority planning,<sup>1</sup> points to its failure to evolve a rational model and to its reliance on symbolic or ritualistic exercise in citizen participation as two of the paramount problems. He identifies "four major elements in the priority system: (1) values or goals, (2) causal factors or variables, (3) professional functions, (4) specific services,"<sup>2</sup> and discusses their functional relationship. Using Mencher's model as a point of departure, we are concerned here with an empirical and theoretical exploration of yet another central

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Mencher, "Current Priority-planning," *Social Work*, IX, No. 3 (1964), 27-35; for a bibliography of studies, see pp. 27, 28. See also United Community Funds and Councils of America, Inc., *Priority Studies and Determination of Needs in Community Welfare Research* (New York: 1960); Joseph C. Lagey and Beverly Ayres, "Priority Determination Plans" (Vancouver, B.C.: Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area, 1960; mimeographed); United Community Funds and Councils of America, *Priorities in Community Services* (New York, 1960).

<sup>2</sup> Mencher, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

problem in priority planning: *who* is to determine priority of need?

Mencher is of the opinion that citizens' judgment is most appropriate in ordering the major values or goals, while a determination of causal factors and the ordering of functions and services relevant to these functions call for technical and professional expertise and are therefore not subject to priority determination on a value basis.<sup>3</sup>

His article provides some examples of primary goals with reference to which priority determination might be made. Among his examples are:

1. The strengthening of psychosocial adjustment services
2. The maintenance of a balanced pattern of services
3. The support of cultural diversity within the community
4. The expansion of the frontier of social welfare knowledge and techniques.<sup>4</sup>

Mencher believes that the determination of priorities on such major goals is a value decision, whereas the achievement of each of these goals is a technical problem to be handled by the expert.<sup>5</sup>

Mencher's distinction between primary, value-based goals and implementation of goals is a useful one. Moreover, the corresponding role differentiation between layman and expert would seem to hold promise for a more rational division of labor in the welfare field than exists at the present time. One problem which arises, however, and is of central concern in this study, has to do with the meaningful application of the concept value-based goals to the activity of priority determination by citizens. The citizen that Mencher has in mind are planners and policy-makers of health and welfare services. They serve on boards and committees of community chests and councils, united funds, public and private organizations, agencies, and institutions. Their relationship to the local welfare system is on the level of service, not of major values or goals. Their experience and interest lead them to reach conclusions relative, firstly, to the prevalence and quality of services and secondly and hopefully, relative to the connection between community problems and services. The citizen is less likely

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

to have developed ideas and attitudes on broad goals regarding subjects as diverse as the balancing of service patterns (which, in any case, calls for expert knowledge in the area of community organization and administration), cultural diversity, and voluntary citizen participation.

In any case, an important prerequisite for a complex assignment such as the priority determination of goals is the logical clarity of the goal dimension to be rated and relevancy of the rating to the role of the rater. The goals to be rated should represent a set of choices among courses of action at a similar level of operation. It makes little sense to choose between two goals when the first can be easily subsumed under the second one. In addition, the citizen who is charged with stating his preference for one goal or another should also be asked to respond at a level at which a given value is, in the experience of the citizen, related clearly to a course of action. The goal of expanding the frontiers of welfare knowledge, based upon the belief that knowledge is a desirable thing, is vague because it may imply a variety of alternative courses of action, many of them probably outside the experience of citizens. One may even wonder whether this goal has a common meaning to any group of even the best-informed citizens. This is not to deny Mencher's contention that "the ordering of functions and the services relevant to these is a matter of expertise."<sup>6</sup> Rather the argument made here contends that the ordering of goals which are unrelated or only remotely related to the activities and experiences of lay members of welfare planning groups is devoid of a good rationale.<sup>7</sup>

Several years ago the senior author, as a member of a board of directors of a council of social agencies, suggested involving representatives of the consumers of welfare services in the planning operation. One board member replied, and was supported by some others, that "there is no use trying this since these people do not

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Neither does this argument deal with the philosophical implications of a community's ordering priorities on the abstract level of societal and institutional goals rather than on a program-action level. Is it desirable for local groups of citizens to order in priority broad goals all of which, from a societal point of view, are essential both to the realization of its ideological commitments and the effective functioning of its institutions? More pointedly, what are the implications of formal community rejection of societal goals or values?

speak our language." The problem is, of course, not that "these people do not speak our language" but rather that we don't speak theirs.

Joseph Lagey and Beverly Ayres, in a survey of priority determination plans in 136 North American chests and councils, concluded that no general pattern prevails as to who formulates priority plans. "Special priority committees," they report, "are set up in some instances, and in others it is done by the budget sections, especially where the Chest and Council operate separately."<sup>8</sup> We have found very little evidence of any attempt to question either the legitimacy or the validity of priority determination by the planners and policy-makers of welfare services. In fact, there is little evidence that this question has become an issue in the priority studies published so far. Interestingly enough, it is not the literature on priority studies but the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964 which articulates the desirability of involving users of services in the operation of community action programs. The Act states that the term "community action program" means a program "which is developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served."<sup>9</sup>

Whatever may be our reservations about employing attitudes on goal priorities as a basis for welfare planning, it goes without saying that a determination of community attitudes must take full account of the views of the population which not only uses the services, or needs services not yet in existence, but also contributes materially to their maintenance. The argument might be made that the bulk of this population lacks knowledge and experience in welfare planning and is, therefore, not well qualified to contribute toward decision-making. Such an argument fails to take into account the very process proposed here, which follows closely the Mencher thesis. Priority determination rests upon an expression of goals desired in a community welfare program,<sup>10</sup> and these goals, in return, reflect basic values underlying desired objectives. If the

<sup>8</sup> Lagey and Ayres, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Public Law 88-452, 88th Congress, S.2642, August 20, 1964, An Act to Mobilize the Human and Financial Resources of the Nation to Combat Poverty in the United States, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Mencher, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

expression of goals is in the main a question of value judgment rather than expertise in the area of social welfare, there is little basis for arguing that the average consumer of services is less qualified to express a view than the welfare planner.

At the same time, it is necessary to point out that priority determination is not an unlimited activity but needs to be circumscribed within the realm of citizens' responsibility and competence. In the face of the frequently heard statement that representatives of the welfare community are charged with determining priority of need, it must be stated that citizens' attitudes are but an imperfect measure of community need. A distinction must be made between determination of need and determination of *priority* of need. Need will have to be measured by means of objective indices which reflect the necessity of requirements (resources, services, facilities) for satisfying individuals and groups in the community. Need determination is properly the task of the expert whether he be social scientist, medical and public health researcher, or practitioner in the fields of health and social welfare. The practitioners in the helping professions together with the behavioral scientists are charged with insuring the meeting of survival needs in society. The values underlying the meeting of those needs were set down by society long ago: all men are created equal and independent; they have inherent and inalienable rights among which are the preservation of life, and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Society has taken on the responsibility for preventing starvation, relieving physical and emotional suffering, lightening the burden of the handicapped, and so on.

The democratic process of priority determination cannot be applied to the operation of meeting survival needs. The ordering of goals on the basis of individual value preferences must proceed beyond the floor level of satisfying the very basic requirements of the population. The selection of health and welfare goals by community representatives, to be meaningful, should represent a setting down of judgments on the desirability of various courses of action for developing or strengthening types of facilities, services, or other kinds of community resources. The choices, as stated earlier, should fall within the experience of those who are asked to do



the ordering and yet cover the range of areas commonly identified with the field of community health and welfare.

*Community needs as a basis for ordering goals.*—The research reported here is concerned with the question: Who is to determine priorities? It sought the answer by assessing the attitudes regarding social welfare goals held by a sample of local citizens and by comparing differences between the attitudes of planners and those held by consumers of welfare services. The use of techniques for ranking goals and reporting degrees of acceptance or rejection makes it possible to reach conclusions about the priority of attitudes expressed.

This study is the third in a series conducted by the Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work. The first endeavor inquired into the nature of welfare leaders' attitudes on the need for welfare services.<sup>11</sup> Members of the Community Welfare Council and the Budget Committee of the United Fund in a New Jersey community rated the importance of thirty welfare activities and services, all of which had been selected by the community leaders as meeting needs in the community. Findings included: (1) decisive differences in the way that members of the United Fund Budget Committee (mostly business people) and the Community Welfare Council (mostly professionals) viewed the importance of services; and (2) a lack of correlation between importance (rank on priority list) and the degree of consensus among raters.

In the second study a list of the ten services and activities, labeled "needs," given the highest priority by the community welfare leaders was presented to a sample of 249 members of voluntary organizations.<sup>12</sup> A large "don't know" response on the part of the latter group to the so-called "administrative" needs indicated that issues which are given high priority by leaders are not necessarily meaningful to members of the voluntary organizations. In short, issues such as "a general survey of community needs" or "general communal planning within the Welfare Council for pro-

<sup>11</sup> Leo Nover *et al.*, "A Study of the Social Welfare Needs of the New Brunswick Area," unpublished thesis, Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work, 1961.

<sup>12</sup> Isabel Wolock, "Community Orientation toward Social Welfare Needs and Services," unpublished manuscript.

grams of the aged" may be significant to the welfare planner or policy-maker but devoid of meaning to the average citizen.

The third study—the one reported here—utilized a list of welfare needs which had received a meaningful response from the large bulk of leaders and nonleaders in the previous research. It also included services and facilities that had been listed by respondents as "additional needs" but had not been included among the original items set down by the investigators. A basic characteristic of all these items, in contrast to some of those in the earlier study, is their concreteness as well as their universality of application. Respondents were, in fact, asked to assess the importance of action relative to requirements for certain *kinds* of activities, services, and facilities which were labeled "community needs." Imprecise though the term may be, it reminded the interviewee of our intention to have him assign priority to issues which call for action on the local level.<sup>13</sup> These "issues" are, in fact, types of services and resources whose endorsement represents goals for action. While they may properly be designated "goals" in Mencher's usage, they are instrumental rather than ultimate goals (which are, in effect, values), and their purpose is to relieve existing community need. In other words, the present priority research established a guideline for the ordering of goals by asking interviewees to endorse, or not endorse, types of services or resources in terms of their perception of community need.

The issues on which respondents were asked to make an assessment had been culled from the two previous studies. There were twenty-four items, covering broadly conceived needs or requirements for services and resources in the area of health and welfare, and these items were pretested with respondents of different educational and status levels. The needs grouped themselves under four headings: economic, health, adjustment, and community development, defined as follows:

1. Economic needs: requirements for resources and services to assure minimally adequate income maintenance through the provision of jobs or financial assistance

<sup>13</sup> Here, in keeping with our view of the professional's responsibility in the determination of need, appropriate "causal factors or variables" are considered by him in his formulation of specific kinds of services and facilities presented to the lay planner for priority ordering.

2. Health needs: requirements for facilities and services to assist people in their biological adjustment and development
3. Adjustment needs: requirements for services and facilities to help individuals, families, and groups in their psychosocial adjustment
4. Community development needs: requirements for resources and services aimed at dealing with diverse and community-wide problems.

The twenty-four items were unequally distributed among the four types of need, with half of them falling under "adjustment" as against four items each under the other three kinds of need. This distribution is less a reflection of actual, objective need in American society at large than evidence of a situation where welfare service patterns focus upon the adjustment of psychologically and socially handicapped individuals living in the city. Since needs in this study are selected as a basis for the ordering of action goals, needs must necessarily be viewed within the context of existing service patterns.<sup>14</sup>

Planners and consumers were asked to respond to each item of need<sup>15</sup> on an affirmation-rejection continuum by indicating in the appropriate column whether a need was: very important (action needed immediately); important (action needed but not necessarily immediately); not important (many needs rank above this one; no action called for at this time); or not a need. Each respondent was also given the option to check the "Don't Know" column, which was a residual category indicating inability to evaluate or unwillingness to state an opinion.

*The sample.*—Our present study, with its objective the comparison of attitudes of planners and consumers of welfare services to-

<sup>14</sup> This statement should not be misconstrued as a naïve acceptance of the definition of service needs in terms of existing service patterns. Rather, it is offered with the realization that priority planning *per se* cannot be charged with the task of solving complex problems within the social welfare system. We would be the last to deny that involvement of the consumer of welfare services in certain phases of priority planning can offer clues to innovation.

<sup>15</sup> "Need" as used here can be defined as a requirement for services or facilities rather than what Bertram Black termed an intrinsic necessity of human beings. See Bertram J. Black, "Basic Concepts Involved in Measurement of Need for Health and Welfare Services," in *The Use of Research Techniques in Determining Need for Health and Welfare Services* (New York: Community Chest and Councils of America, Inc., 1949), p. 4.

ward goals, was carried out in a community of about 40,000 on the Eastern seaboard. Planners were viewed as a relatively small number of citizens on the boards and committees of organizations, agencies, and institutions, both public and private, who have decision-making responsibility for social welfare programs affecting the lives of relatively large numbers of people. "Social welfare planning is directed," in the words of Bouterse, "primarily to the development, maintenance, strengthening, and readjustment of social welfare service."<sup>16</sup> The planners included in this study were citizens responsible for the welfare program of their local community.

It is fully realized that the planners or formal decision-makers studied in this case were often not the people who wield the power to make decisions. An exploration of the views of the welfare power structure might actually have been a more valid way of contrasting the attitudes of planners and consumers. Yet, the very complexity of such an undertaking would have required a study in itself. The design of the present study was based on the assumption that those who are charged with planning welfare services do have an important part in decision-making simply because they control the channels through which the latent power flows.

The specific planners selected for this study represented the Community Welfare Council, United Fund Budget Committee, Public Welfare Board, Community Housing Authority, City Council, and Board of County Commissioners. The fifty-eight respondents in the planning group were 73 percent of the total number (80) of planners asked to participate. Private planners who were members of the Community Welfare Council and the United Fund Budget Committee made up 79 percent of the respondents. The refusal rate for study participation was 48 percent for public planners but only 20 percent for private planners. Each planner was requested to fill out a self-administered, eight-page, structured questionnaire which could be completed in twenty to thirty minutes.

The so-called "consumers of welfare service" were 382 adults

<sup>16</sup> David A. Bouterse, "Basic Considerations in Social Planning for Older People at the State Level," in *State Planning for Older People* (New York: National Council on the Aging, 1964), p. 16.

who represented a 5 percent probability sample of local households. These respondents were actually only 60 percent of the sample of 632 drawn. For various reasons the remaining 40 percent did not participate in the study: 9 percent (57) could not be reached after several visits to their listed address, or their address in the city directory could not be located; 20 percent (127) refused; 7 percent (41) spoke a language not mastered by the interviewer; 4 percent (25) were ill, there was illness or a recent death in their family, or they did not complete the interview. The 382 participating respondents completed the same questionnaire as the planners, but the questions were read aloud and the answers were checked by the interviewers. The interviewee was permitted to read the question as well as listen to it if he so desired.

Interviewers were instructed to question only heads of households and to alternate, if possible, between women and men. Because most of the interviews were carried out during the day, the sample became heavily weighted with women at a ratio of nearly three to one (282 women; 100 men).

*The questionnaire and its reliability.*—The questionnaire was composed of seventy-three items which, with few exceptions, were structured (multiple-choice) items.<sup>17</sup> This schedule was developed from the two earlier priority-of-need studies. A pretest of the questionnaire preceded the present study. The major variables covered by the questionnaire were as follows: twenty-four items on welfare needs as a basis for action; respondents' attitudes toward social welfare in general and local welfare services in particular; the Srole Anomie Scale (measuring a person's integration *vs.* his alienation from society); and demographic data on social status and mobility.

Such a highly structured instrument for data collection needs to be tested for reliability before any assumptions can be made that the answers validly reflect the views of the respondents. The test-retest method appeared to be the only appropriate technique for a questionnaire composed of many, in part unrelated, variables. Thirty-eight first semester graduate students in a school of social

<sup>17</sup> The exceptions are "additional needs" (for social action) not listed, occupation of respondent and spouse, and previous place of residence. These items had been precoded also.



work were administered the questionnaire on a test-retest basis at a four-week interval.<sup>18</sup>

Questions dealing with attitudes had to be checked by means of two continua: strongly agree; agree; disagree; strongly disagree; and, in the case of twenty-four items calling for a response on whether they represent a need for action, very important need; important need; not important need; and not a need. Hence, all attitudinal items called for a four-point response, two being affirmative and two essentially negative.

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined by a comparison of checks made in the same categories on both tests. More detailed results of the reliability study are reported elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> On attitudinal questions (excluding demographic data, which showed very high reliability), the percentage of identical responses was 68.4 with a range from 60.5 percent to 100 percent.

The reliability for cross-over from affirmative to negative response was substantially higher, with a mean percentage of 92.6 and a range from 81.6 percent to 100 percent. On only three out of thirty-four scaled items did the switch from agreement to disagreement or "important" to "unimportant" exceed 10 percent of the responses.

The reliability test thus showed that in spite of a considerable degree of attitude change from time 1 to time 2, few respondents shifted from an affirmative to a negative position. This finding led to a decision to analyze the data mainly in terms of an affirmative-negative response pattern rather than on a more refined continuum.

*Hypotheses and research findings.*—In considering the central problem of who is to determine priorities, we have posited that all those concerned, consumers as well as planners of welfare services, should be polled. The reason for advancing this argument is found

<sup>18</sup> In view of the already high refusal rate a request that interviewees complete two schedules did not seem indicated. Although it could be argued that students, in the process of studying social work, have less durable views on social welfare issues, we were concerned with testing the consistency of views over a short-time period. In any case, less durability poses more stringent criteria.

<sup>19</sup> Eugene Chylak *et al.*, "Factors Influencing Social Welfare Planners' Attitudes toward Need for Services," unpublished thesis, Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work, 1964.



in the basic hypothesis for this study: consumers of services differ from planners in their perception of goals. In operational terms, the extent to which necessity for action is based on a perception of social welfare need varies between planners and consumers. The reason for this lies in the differences in role, status, and life experience of the two groups.

More specifically, we hypothesize that differences between the two groups are of two kinds:

1. Consumers are more affirmative of need-related goals than planners of services because the former are experiencing a wider variety of needs more immediately and more intensively. This experience, which is largely a function of their lower socioeconomic status,<sup>20</sup> leads them to affirm more strongly the existence of needs as a basis for action than do the planners of welfare services.

2. We hypothesize a differential in need affirmation based upon the saliency of perceptions and concerns of planners and consumers. Adjustment and community development needs, with their relatively higher concentration of activities within the purview of local welfare planning, are seen as receiving stronger affirmation by planners. We postulate that economic and health needs, being a more marginal concern in welfare planning and yet tangibly perceived and felt by the rank and file, will get stronger affirmation from consumers than from welfare planners.

Every respondent was given a total score for his responses on the twenty-four needs to which he was asked to state affirmation or nonaffirmation. Because the reliability study showed satisfactory response reliability only for answers scored dichotomously, the need items were scored as being either affirmative (with a value of 2) or negative (with a value of 1). The total need affirmation score for each interviewee is the mean score of his responses (excluding "don't knows"), which can range theoretically from a score of 1.00 to a score of 2.00.

<sup>20</sup> Over 50 percent of the planners were identified as being members of classes I and II on the Hollingshead two-factor status scale. Only slightly over 10 percent of the consumers fell into these status categories, whereas 60 percent were found to belong to classes V and VI. The scale, based upon a recomputation (by Professor William D. Wells, of Rutgers University) of factor weights of the Hollingshead and Redlich Index of Social Position, utilizes education and occupation as class criteria and differentiates among six instead of the I.S.P.'s five classes.

Differences in need affirmation between planners and consumers were determined by comparing the means of the need affirmation scores for each group. The mean need affirmation scores were 1.80 (*S.D.* 16) for planners and 1.86 (*S.D.* 17) for consumers of welfare service. While both groups were, by and large, highly affirmative of action to deal with social need, and mean differences were small, there is evidence that the consumers were significantly more strongly affirmative on need for action than the planners.<sup>21</sup> In short, planners of social welfare services in the community endorse the given list of needs less often as an important or very important cause for action than do the rank and file of local residents. This finding supports our first hypothesis.

Differences on affirmation favored the consumers on twenty-one out of the twenty-four needs. The three exceptions were "more work programs and job retraining for the unemployed," "better probation, parole, and corrective institutional services," and "community planning for minorities." Differences in the percentages on affirmation on the first two are small (1 percent and 3 percent respectively) and must necessarily, as suggested by the low chi-squares, be ascribed to chance. Planning for minorities, however, was significantly more strongly endorsed by the planners (percentage difference of 13).

On ten needs, differences in endorsement between planners and consumers ranged from 0 to 5 percent and were statistically non-significant. On four further needs—"adequate minimum wages and fringe benefits"; "better services for the physically handicapped"; "more low-cost or free medical and dental services"; and "more adequate posthospital and home medical care"—consumers were decidedly more affirmative, but the differences, which ranged between 6 percent and 13 percent, approached statistical significance (at the 5 percent level) only on the last two needs (health needs).

That left seven types of need as a basis for action on which consumers were statistically significantly more affirmative than plan-

<sup>21</sup> The null hypothesis that there are no differences between the means of the two populations was rejected ( $t = 2.53$ ) at the 2 percent level. In view of the skewness of the distribution the validity of the parametric  $t$  test was questioned. The null hypothesis that there are no differences between the medians of the two populations (median test,  $\chi^2 = 2.70$ ) was rejected at the 10 percent level only.

ners of welfare services (range of difference between 14 percent and 26 percent). These needs fall into the categories of economic need (two), and adjustment need (four), and community development need (one).

If we confine ourselves only to those needs for action on which the two groups manifested response differences which could not be ascribed to chance, we find that planners of welfare services were more affirmative on only a single need, "community planning for minorities," defined as a community development need. A second community development need, "disease prevention and control," was significantly more strongly endorsed by consumers, while two further needs in this category did not yield different responses. Hence, the first part of our second hypothesis was not confirmed by the data.

Consumers of welfare services, as stated above, were significantly more affirmative on two economic needs (50 percent of such listed needs, four adjustment needs (16 percent of these needs), and one community development need (25 percent of these needs). Since the remaining 50 percent of economic needs did not differentiate significantly between responses of consumers and planners, it can be argued that this portion of the second hypothesis received at best partial support. Significant differences established here on endorsement of four adjustment needs in favor of consumers are counter to the above hypothesis.

However, it is also possible to look at the array of needs from a different point of view and question the characteristics of the needs which were more strongly affirmed by each of the two groups. One of the most striking differences in affirmation of a need was on "better leisure-time services and facilities." Less than half of the planners but nearly three quarters of the consumers considered better leisure-time provision an important or most important need.<sup>22</sup> "Better community-wide disease prevention and control" and "more adequate financial assistance for those without

<sup>22</sup> This was the only issue which received less than 50 percent affirmation from either group. All other needs were endorsed by at least 60 percent of respondents in the lower, usually the planner, group. It may be worthy of note that about a year after the study, a conflict which ensued between a community action group and the city government focused largely on the problem of lack of public recreational facilities.

regular income" were two further needs on which consumers were substantially more affirmative. Lesser but still statistically significant differences favoring consumers were registered on "a central advice, information, and referral service for people with problems," "better low-rental housing," "more and better low-cost or free legal services," and "homemaker services at nominal rates or free."

A common denominator of these seven needs is their universal character. These are not needs of any special age group or population with handicaps, but needs which are likely to be of concern to any individual or family, especially if they are not affluent. Leisure-time, disease prevention, homemaker, and central advice and information services are likely to benefit all citizens. Better financial assistance in time of need, better low-rental housing, and low-cost legal services are needs chiefly of those who are either deprived or economically vulnerable, but it can be argued that in a nonprosperous community, such as the one where this study was made, the combined groups represent a substantial portion of the population.<sup>23</sup>

The single need which received a statistically significantly greater endorsement by the planners was "community planning for minority groups." The differential seems to reflect a heightened sensitivity on the part of planners to one of the most explosive issues of the day. Nearly all of them (93 percent) considered planning for minorities a very important or important need as against 80 percent of the consumers.

There were no significant differences in affirmation between planners and consumers on any other needs of special groups, such as children, the aged, the handicapped, or the retarded. The absence of difference is not to be taken as low endorsement. Quite to the contrary, services to the mentally retarded and to persons with mental health problems, facilities for children away from home, and job training for the unemployed received the highest degree

<sup>23</sup> The median yearly income for "families and unrelated individuals" in the town where the study was done is \$3,909. The comparable figure for the surrounding New York-northeastern New Jersey consolidated area is \$5,726. Bureau of Census. *1960 Census of Population of the United States*, I, Part 32 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), 256.

of affirmation (95 percent–98 percent) from both groups. There was near unanimity among planners and consumers about the importance of these needs.<sup>24</sup> Such information represents data which can give helpful guidance to the community planner. The same is true for needs which received a high consensus between the groups but relatively low affirmation. Among those needs are two which deal with better medical and hospital services.

Our failure to validate the second hypothesis poses the question whether it is possible at this stage, without data from a number of community-need studies, to postulate feasible hypotheses on the content of differential response patterns. There is little question that local situations determine to a large extent not only the degree of need affirmation but also the differences between planners and consumers in perception of needs for types of services. A theory of need affirmation will have to be concerned with the social conditions in the urban community which shape the perception of need. On the basis of empirical data from the present study we are inclined tentatively to advance the argument that differences in response patterns reflect differences in concern which arise both from personal need and role in the community. The planners were more strongly affirmative on one need which had become a major issue of the day and a special challenge for the planners. The rank and file of respondents, representing a cross section of local residents, showed more concern than the planners for a series of needs that actually affect, or with a potential for affecting, the life of the average citizen, especially if he is economically vulnerable.

If this study has failed to yield results pointing the way toward a formulation of theory which ties need affirmation to relevant community goals, the research has produced evidence that social role is a decisive factor in the choice of goals. Within the framework of the present analysis we have been satisfied to differentiate crudely between planners and consumers of services. Such a distinction

<sup>24</sup>In spite of the consumers' stronger affirmation of need for action, the differential response of consumers and planners to the twenty-four needs turned out to be quite similar. This is shown by a rank order correlation of  $+ .78 (p = < .001)$  between the two groups in the proportion of respondents who endorsed the respective needs as very important or important.



cloaks a number of roles, including employment, consumption of goods and services, ethnic and racial group membership, social participation, and so forth, the most common denominator of which is social status. The connection between social status (as reflected by the Hollingshead two-factor scale) and endorsement of the twenty-four needs is indeed shown by a mean of correlations (gamma) of  $-.23$  for the sample of consumers.<sup>25</sup> This is not a high degree of association, but the direction was consistently negative on every need. That is to say, higher status respondents tended to be less affirmative than those of lower social status on the issue of action to meet the needs.

The question has surely arisen in the minds of the readers whether the consumers' stronger affirmativeness on welfare goals is not wholly or largely a function of their lowest social status. The answer can be found by correlating the rank order of the needs, as they vary between the responses of planners and consumers, with the needs rank order for negative association with social status. As expected, the two rank orders are significantly correlated ( $\rho = +.34$   $p < .05$ ), but the low coefficient suggests that status accounts to only a limited extent for the difference between planners and consumers in their endorsement of welfare goals. Other factors which may account for such differences are at the present stage of analysis a matter of conjecture. Yet the evidence of status-related differences points to the likelihood that a variety of social roles may affect the extent to which members of the community will affirm various needs as a cause for action. The findings of this study can put to rest a widely believed myth that the attitudes of welfare planners reflect the views of the consumers of welfare services.

Priority-of-need studies seek to provide correctives to welfare planning by employing democratic processes of rational decision-making at the community level. We accepted Mencher's thesis that priority determination involves the ordering of goals but added the qualification that these goals should represent alternatives for action which fall within the experience of the citizen who participates in decision-making. The function of the professional is to ensure the meeting of survival needs, to pinpoint causal fac-

<sup>25</sup> The range is from  $-.03$  to  $-.52$  with a standard deviation of  $.16$ .



tors, and to implement the programs accepted by the community.

There are some very fine distinctions to be made in a free society regarding the methods of, and levels on which, basic societal values and goals are to be formally scrutinized. At the base of this hierarchy is the Bill of Rights, representing ultimate societal values. Next come a number of essential democratic tenets, two examples of which might well be the fostering of cultural diversity and the development of maximum citizen participation. Basic values and democratic tenets constitute the bedrock in which the welfare system is anchored. At the next level of analysis are the requisites (instrumental goals) of institutional viability. Expansion of the knowledge base of professions operating within the institution, seeking a functional balance among its activities, improvement of its services, and innovation within the institution, are examples of goals on this level. It is on this level also that the professional, through his knowledge of community and need and appropriate means of coping with need, is able to present citizens with alternative goals for action. The citizen, through his participation in priority determination, is given an opportunity to express his ideological and material commitment to the maintenance and improvement of facilities and services.

Because value-based decisions regarding a community's welfare obviously are not the sole province of the planner, a model for a decision-making process calls for an exploration of differences in attitude between planners and consumers of welfare service regarding priority of need for action. The present research was devoted to such an exploration. The significant finding of this study is the confirmation of over-all differences between planners and consumers of services in affirmation of needs as a basis for action. The existence of such differences can hardly be ignored by community planners who are conscious of their responsibility for planning in relation to need as perceived by the total community. Although the ultimate determination of priorities for action may have to rely on data beyond the attitudes of any group of community residents, the attitudes themselves, of consumers no less than of planners, are the very fabric from which must be fashioned the blueprint for social change.

# *Unwed Mothers Who Keep Their Children: Research and Implications*<sup>1</sup>

by MIGNON SAUBER and  
JANICE PANETH

THERE IS AN INCREASING AWARENESS in the field of social work of the need to shift from a preoccupation with out-of-wedlock pregnancy to a consideration of the unwed mother. Nationally, well over two of every three women pregnant out of wedlock are, in fact, unmarried mothers since they keep their infants to raise themselves. Therefore, the Community Council of Greater New York undertook a follow-up study of such mothers in the New York area in an effort to obtain information that would be an aid to social planning and to practice.<sup>2</sup> The study was concerned with only women for whom this was a first live birth in order to learn more about unwed women for whom motherhood was a new experience. This subgroup accounts for an estimated 35 percent of all women who bear children out of wedlock each year in New York City.

Data were obtained from 273 women who were reached initially through a sample of New York City hospitals where they were seen at the time of confinement. They were interviewed three times subsequently—at about the time of the baby's six-, twelve-, and eighteen-month birthdays. This period of data collection extended from October, 1962, until September, 1964.

*Characteristics.*—Expectedly, this subgroup of unwed mothers is

<sup>1</sup> The ideas expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of their agencies.

<sup>2</sup> Mignon Sauber and Elaine Rubinstein, *The Unwed Mother's Experiences as a Parent* (in preparation). This study was financed, in part, by Grant No. 059 from the Welfare Administration, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

younger than the group of unmarried mothers as a whole. Fifty-two percent were under twenty, including nearly 20 percent who were under seventeen. Only 12 percent were aged twenty-five or older.

The ethnic composition of the study group was 65 percent Negro, 24 percent Puerto Rican, and 11 percent white and thus differs from the ethnic distribution for all births out of wedlock in New York City, of which about 64 percent are Negroes, 18 percent Puerto Rican, and 18 percent white. The sharp contrast in the proportion who were white reflected, of course, their more frequent decision to surrender the baby for adoption.

*Living arrangements and personal associations.*—The unwed mother's living arrangements emerged as a key variable in her total life situation. How she and the baby were supported varied by living arrangements as did whether or not she went to work or returned to school. Eighteen months after the birth of the baby, 41 percent of these unwed mothers were living with their own families or relatives, 27 percent were living with the putative father (including 15 percent who had married him), 15 percent were living with the baby alone, 7 percent were living with their husbands (who were not the putative fathers), and 10 percent were living with friends or had made other arrangements.

Although these arrangements prevailed at the time of the third follow-up, many had changed their mode of living several times since the baby's birth. For example, although 27 percent of the women were living with the putative father at the time of the third follow-up, only 15 percent had lived with him continuously since confinement. Similarly, although 15 percent lived with the baby alone at the time of the third follow-up, only 7 percent had lived with just the baby since its birth.

There was, of course, a relationship between age and living arrangements. The younger the unwed mother, the more likely she would be to live with her family. Proportionately more of the unwed mothers aged seventeen through twenty-four and proportionately fewer of those under seventeen, or aged twenty-five or older, lived with the putative fathers.

The importance of the putative father is indicated by the fact

that although only 15 percent of the women studied lived with the putative father steadily throughout the eighteen-month study period, a much larger number—33 percent had lived with him during part of that time.

Many who had not lived with the putative fathers had maintained contact with them. At the time of the third follow-up, not only were 27 percent living with the putative father, but another 31 percent were still in touch with him. Therefore, only about two out of every five of these woman—42 percent—had lost contact before the baby's eighteen-month birthday.

As might be expected, the longer the unwed mother had known the putative father before the child's birth, the more likely she was to remain in touch with him thereafter. Of the total group studied, just under 3 percent had known the putative father for less than a year and had lost contact with him during pregnancy; 36 percent had known him for at least two years prior to the birth of the baby and were still in touch with him eighteen months later.

Perhaps of most importance in indicating the role of the putative father is the fact that 17 percent of the women studied had married him by the time the baby was a year and a half old (15 percent were living with him and 2 percent were not). Another 9 percent were married to other men. Thus, one out of every four of these mothers was married by eighteen months after the baby's birth.

Another area of interest with respect to the personal life and associations of these women was whether or not they became pregnant again. Approximately eighteen months after the birth of their first babies, 37 percent had experienced another pregnancy, including 13 percent who were married and 24 percent who were not married at the time of the eighteen-month follow-up interview.

*Socioeconomic situation.*—The relatively low economic level of many of the women in this group is illustrated, in part, by the housing facilities in which they lived. Although the great majority occupied apartments, at the eighteen-month follow-up as many as 13 percent or about one in eight—lived in single rooms. About four fifths of the quarters occupied by these women had both

kitchen and bathroom facilities within their own premises, but 21 percent did not. Thus, with eighteen-month-old babies to care for, one in five of these women had to go outside her own quarters in order to use the bathroom or kitchen.

The housing problem of these women is evidenced further by the fact that 69 percent of them moved at least once during the study period, including 19 percent who moved three times or more. Overcrowding was given as the main reason for moving, while finances, shabby facilities, and discord in the household were also frequently mentioned. As these women moved about, substantially more of them faced the difficulties of caring for their infants in quarters which did not include kitchen and bathroom. In fact, only 58 percent of the total group studied had both essentials within their own quarters throughout the period.

Despite these indications of the substandard and inadequate housing occupied by some of these women, as a group they cannot be classified as economically dependent. For one thing, the significant role of the putative father as a source of support is evident. Proportionately more of the unwed mothers—64 percent—received at least *some* help from the putative father than received help from any other source except their own families. At the time of the eighteen-month follow-up, the putative father was the *main* source of support for 25 percent, and for 15 percent he was the *sole* source of support.

Although their own families were the most frequent source of support for these women (68 percent), their help became less frequent and earnings more frequent as time went along. At the end of the study period 21 percent of these women relied upon their own earnings as their *main* source of income while for 8 percent it was their *only* income.

It is clear from these data that this group of unwed mothers, whose children were very, very young, did not rely in any large number upon public assistance for their basic living expenses for any continuous period of time. Although 41 percent of the women received public assistance at one time or another during the study period, only about 23 percent of the total group were in receipt of such assistance at any one time. Furthermore, for only about 13



percent of the total group was public assistance the sole source of support at any point, and for only 3 percent was it the sole source of support *throughout* the entire period.<sup>3</sup>

The above data on the importance of employment as a source of income to this group understate the extent to which the women studied went to work after the baby's birth. Altogether, three out of every five had worked at some time since the baby's birth. By the time of the babies' eighteen-month birthdays, 42 percent of the mothers had not worked at all, 26 percent had worked but stopped, and the rest, 32 percent, were employed. At least two fifths of the women who *had* worked since the baby's birth began this employment before the baby was six months old.

The educational level of this group was somewhat lower than that of women of similar ages in this city. For some, however, pregnancy and subsequent childbirth did not mean the end of their education. About a fifth of the group returned to school or enrolled in special classes after the birth of the baby, including 17 percent who returned to regular public school classes. By the time of the third interview, the outcome for this 17 percent was: 2 percent had graduated from high school; 6 percent had again dropped out of school; and 9 percent were still enrolled.

*Child care.*—Seventy-five percent of the women interviewed had their babies at home with them on a full-time basis at the time of the eighteen-month follow-up; 12 percent had arranged for part-time care of their babies away from home; and for 11 percent, care away from home on a full-time basis was the plan. Four babies had been surrendered for adoption and one had died.

Some of the women who kept their babies at home on a full-time basis had help with the baby's care, but most did not. Fifty-four percent were caring for their babies themselves in their homes without help at the time of the eighteen-month interview.

Three fifths of the babies cared for away from home on a full-time basis were with the mother's own family or relatives. Eight

<sup>3</sup> That this situation might change as the children become older is suggested by the fact that proportionately more of the older than of the younger unwed mothers require public aid. See Blanche Bernstein and Mignon Sauber, *Deterrants to Early Prenatal Care and Social Services among Women Pregnant Out-of-Wedlock* (Albany, N.Y.: New York State Department of Social Welfare, 1960).



babies (3 percent of the total) were in social agency foster care. Of those away from home only part time, over half (7 percent of the total) were in the care of unrelated persons.

The most common arrangement for a working mother at the time of the eighteen-month follow-up was to have her child in his own home on a full-time basis. The second most common arrangement was for the child to be away from home full or part time, either with the unwed mother's own family or with the putative father or his family. Only about one working mother out of five left her child in the care of friends or strangers.

Whether working mothers or not, many of the women were not satisfied with their child-care arrangements. This dissatisfaction was often related to the mother's desire to work or to study, to which care of the baby constituted an obstacle. Half the unmarried mothers who said they had wanted to work but did not gave as their reason their inability to make suitable plans for the baby.

*Expressed needs.*—The problems that emerge from these data are clearly not related exclusively to the fact that these are unwed women who have a young child to care for but also echo the problems shared by other low-income families. This is illustrated by some of the responses to the following question asked in the final interview: "Thinking back to the time you became pregnant and up to the present, do you think there is anything any city agency, or a social agency, or a welfare agency could have done that might have helped you?" The two most common answers, each given by nearly 30 percent of the total group, pointed to a need for adequate low-cost housing and assistance with everyday living expenses.

The extent to which this group seeks help from the community is indicated by the fact that although all of them reported contacts with a community agency or a professional person, for 24 percent the *only* such contact related to medical care, while for another 22 percent there were medical and Department of Welfare contacts *only*. Thus, nearly half the women studied were *not* availing themselves of the broad range of community health and welfare services.

*Implications.*—The clear correlation between illegitimacy and

lower economic status in the cases studied is illustrative of Elizabeth Herzog's report "that the overwhelming majority of reported births out-of-wedlock are to mothers on the low income levels."<sup>4</sup> Although there is no direct equation between low income and out-of-wedlock pregnancy, it is important to restate that illegitimacy is more endemic in that economic segment of our population. Work with individuals shows that the tolerance of frustration generally requires some belief and trust in future fulfillment. When, in addition to the straitened reality, the lack of choice and mobility attendant on lower economic status is realized, heed must be given to Merton's statement:

. . . the social structure strains the cultural values, making action in accord with them readily possible for those occupying certain statuses within the society and difficult or impossible for others. The social structure acts as a barrier or as an open door to the acting out of cultural mandates. When the cultural and the social structure are mal-integrated, the first calling for behavior and attitudes which the second precludes, there is a strain toward the breakdown of norms, toward normlessness.<sup>5</sup>

The incidence of out-of-wedlock births among teen-agers should also be viewed in its economic context. Elizabeth Herzog's<sup>6</sup> findings, which, unlike the present study, are based upon data on all births out of wedlock, indicate: (1) that the majority of unmarried mothers are not teen-agers; (2) that the teen-ager in 1960 represented the majority of unmarried women of childbearing age; (3) that over a period of twenty years the rate of illegitimate births among teen-agers increased the least; and (4) that for the past few years the rate has been relatively constant.

While this information may be received gratefully, it is certainly no source for satisfaction in view of the information that out of 224,000 out-of-wedlock births in 1960 in the United States, 91,700 were to mothers under twenty years of age.<sup>7</sup> The ramifica-

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Herzog, "Unmarried Mothers: Some Questions to be Answered and Some Answers to be Questioned," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 339-50.

<sup>5</sup> Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (rev. ed.; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), p. 163.

<sup>6</sup> Herzog, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Hannah M. Adams and Ursula M. Gallagher, "Some Facts and Observations about Illegitimacy," *Children*, X (1963), 543-48.

tions of the social cost to mother, to child, to family, and to the community are huge. Is it just coincidence that the jobless rate among girls sixteen to twenty-one years of age is estimated at about 25 percent and that among these girls there are 1,700,000 school dropouts,<sup>8</sup> of which an estimated 1,350,000 are classified below the "poverty" level?<sup>9</sup>

The study findings with respect to ethnic characteristics of the group are consonant with the national findings of the higher rates of out-of-wedlock pregnancy among the nonwhite minorities. Economically, these rates must be viewed in two ways. First of these is the high proportion of nonwhites in the lower economic grouping where the incidence is greatest; second is the relatively lower proportion of whites in the bottom economic strata, so that if the rate for whites also took account of economic levels, it would increase markedly. The assumption that illegitimacy is often a cultural phenomenon, a product, for instance, of the "grandmother" family or the consensual union, requires reexamination. Undoubtedly, in many instances, it is a cultural product, but the extent to which that culture is one of poverty rather than one of ethnicity remains to be determined.

Mothers who keep their babies constitute a majority of the out-of-wedlock group. Estimates from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare<sup>10</sup> indicate that approximately 3 percent of the out-of-wedlock children are adopted and one percent are in foster care. Of those adopted, about 90 percent are white. Again, explanations are apt to lean heavily on cultural differences. However, there is no evidence to support that this is true in the main and that the reason for the discrepancy may not be found in the social difference of provision of opportunity. It is already a well-documented fact that the unmarried mother who gives her baby for adoption is much more apt to use the services of existing social agencies than the mother who keeps her child.<sup>11</sup> However, it is

<sup>8</sup> Vera C. Perrella, "Employment of High School Graduates and Dropouts in 1963," *Monthly Labor Review*, LXXXVII (1964), 522.

<sup>9</sup> Sylvia Porter, *New York Post*, March 25, 1965.

<sup>10</sup> Adams and Gallagher, *op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Bernstein and Sauber, *op. cit.*; Helen Wortis *et al.*, "Development of Lower-Class Premature Children Born in and out of Wedlock," *Social Work*, IX, No. 4

not known whether this is really a true choice or whether this circumstance occurs because middle-class values place a premium on adoption as the solution, and therefore the services which the community makes available are apt to be in accordance with those values. Thus, through its present provision of services, our society carries over its caste and class system to unmarried mothers—the white mother, who is more likely to be of a higher economic group and who, in the majority, gives her baby for adoption finds the services she needs; the nonwhite mother, who in the vast majority keeps her baby, is more apt to do so without any community help at all.

The first and most obvious area of need for the unmarried family is financial. Certainly it is the most publicized. Newspaper and magazine articles abound with statements regarding the public cost of supporting these families. The study findings regarding the relatively few who receive public assistance should cause some second thoughts. The study corroborates the fact that unwed mothers as a group manage minimally and that the Department of Welfare is the social agency with which the unmarried mother who keeps her baby is most likely to have contact. However, when she does experience public concern for her and her child's economic welfare, that concern may be so focused on the requirements that she prove her eligibility, pursue the putative father through uncertain and unfruitful filiation regulations, and turn to her already marginal family for support, that often she decides what she might gain does not warrant the cost.

The living conditions of the unmarried family brought out by the study cannot be separated from the worry about maternal health or about the prematurity and neonatal mortality rates among children born out of wedlock. In New York City there is no public resource which helps to locate housing, and the married as well as the unmarried are subject to the ills of overcrowding, lack of heat, vermin and rodents, and myriad types of disrepair. However, the unmarried mother faces an additional discrimina-

---

(1964), 42-49; William Rashbaum, M.D., *et al.*, *A Study of Extra-marital Pregnancies at the Mount Sinai Hospital of New York* (New York: Mount Sinai Hospital, 1962).

tion. Because of her marital status she is automatically ineligible for public housing. She has no resources with which to test the legality of this restriction even though no information exists to prove that unmarried mothers constitute a less desirable tenant group than any other. The question remains of where the community can find justification for practices which compound the difficulties experienced by the unmarried family.

The study findings with regard to the putative father give further impetus to the ever increasing awareness that he warrants community attention in his own right. It has been a professional tradition that "forced" or early marriages portend a compounding of difficulties and should therefore probably be avoided. Yet the findings that 17 percent of the group married the putative father and that another 41 percent remained in contact with him are further indications of the need to include him and the possibility of marriage in agency services. The individual interviews conducted in the study showed that a number of the mothers would have welcomed such efforts.

Another area of vital interest is that of education and training. As might be expected, the unwed mothers compared unfavorably in educational attainment at varying ages and levels with the total New York City female population, as indicated in the 1960 Census. A substantial proportion ended their school careers at least a year prior to conception. The discontinuance of school was therefore not related to the advent of the pregnancy. For a fourth of the group, however, the school leaving was, in the first instance at least, a direct outcome of pregnancy.

This one fourth was predominantly in the younger age group. The need for the Board of Education to provide for their school attendance rather than have the discovery of pregnancy become the signal for their leaving school, has already been pointed out.<sup>12</sup> This custom is probably the result of a desire to protect other students from the influence of the pregnant girl. Yet there is no evidence that such separation really is a protection or that much is served beyond another addition to the sense of social alienation she already carries. If the community is really concerned with how

<sup>12</sup> Bernstein and Sauber, *op. cit.*



people carry out their social roles, it must be consistent and not exclude any group from the minimal expectations for the whole. For instance, in New York City it would at least mean requiring girls of seventeen and under to return to school.

When the study looks at occupation, the group is again a disadvantaged one. Many of the mothers discussed their desire for special training and education which would enable them to improve their employment skills. Even granting that such training is available, how can the unmarried mother who keeps her child be free to use it? So far, except for an occasional experimental set-up, day care is not provided unless the child is habit trained and two and a half to three years of age. Again, although the study gives us varying figures regarding types of arrangements for baby care, little is known of their adequacy, how they respond to the child's physical and emotional needs, to what extent they might be expected to offer some possibility of overcoming his questioned social status, or how they may be expected to mitigate a self-perpetuating social problem. Pointing out the need for foster day care or nursery care, which would enable the mother to study or work, is not novel, but the widespread dearth of these facilities continues.

Alfred Kahn describes<sup>13</sup> the residence associated with the Copenhagen Mothers' Aid. This is a dormitory building with a day nursery attached. The mother has a room for herself, an alcove for the child, kitchen facilities, and a bathroom. She prepares her child for the day, takes him to the nursery, and picks him up when she returns. Such arrangements enable her to work, or to study so that she may be able to work. They also provide companionship, the possibility of sharing experiences, learning from others, acquiring habits of sound budget management, and realizing that the community is constructively concerned.

Any sociological consideration of out-of-wedlock pregnancy must logically include the question of contraception. This is obvi-

<sup>13</sup> Alfred J. Kahn, "Unmarried Mothers: a Social Welfare Planning Perspective," Northeastern Area Conference, Florence Crittenton Association of America, Inc., Boston, 1964. Experimental programs have been initiated in a few communities in the United States. However, only that of the Berean Institute of Philadelphia offers some but not all of these services to unmarried mothers who keep the child, and none provides actual housing as part of its service.



ously an area of considerable controversy and differing opinion and arouses concern for the public morality. The Kinsey reports, the annual figures on out-of-wedlock pregnancy, and the estimated over one million illegal abortions annually all seem to indicate that there is a gap between standards of behavior and actual practice. The recent developments in the public health and welfare fields do indicate a more widespread availability of contraceptive information. In the main, these developments, too, discriminate against the unmarried mother. However, in March, 1965, the State of New York Department of Social Welfare adopted a resolution to extend the availability of contraceptive information to unmarried heads of families. Cook County, Illinois, which has both a high illegitimacy rate and a high percentage of such families on Aid to Families with Dependent Children rolls, has pioneered in the public provision of contraceptive means to unmarried mothers. The public purse can be an effective means for pressing for this form of social change. The movement is started and will continue to grow. But what about contraceptive information for those who are not yet pregnant? It is a constantly startling statistic that nationally girls under seventeen account for approximately 50,000<sup>14</sup> of our annual out-of-wedlock births. It is also an inescapable biological fact that this group can become pregnant without parental or community consent and with or without adequate sex information. The availability of contraceptive information would not of itself constitute, on the one hand, a threat to the public morality or, on the other, an answer to the problem of illegitimacy. But it is an obligation of society to make the knowledge and the means equally available to all economic classes.

The community already has child health stations because it accepts its responsibility to help to keep children physically well. Should it not expand its efforts in an attempt to keep the adolescent socially healthy? The community might well provide youth health services whose programs would include training in the values of family living. The programing would also need to include full sex information and knowledge of contraception.

In considering the variety of ways in which the community

<sup>14</sup> Adams and Gallagher, *op. cit.*

might better provide for the unmarried mother, the expectation must not be held out that the problem can be met simply by the provision of services. Yet there is little doubt that it can be ameliorated. As shown by the study, a good proportion of the group will use a service if it is generally available and nondiscriminatory. For instance, 165 of the 273 women interviewed did return to the various hospitals for the gynecological check-up within two months of delivery, and 96 percent of the babies had one or more health check-ups.

It should be emphasized that the profession of social work does have a sizable and valuable experience with the psychological causation of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, and notable strides have been made in the efforts to individualize the national statistics. The fact that present services are insufficient and narrowly based detracts neither from their value nor from the need for their continuance. Out-of-wedlock pregnancy is not simply the result of an individual acting out her conflict with the prevailing social mores, but is also a concomitant of the major social problems of our society—of low economic status, of racial discrimination, of school dropouts, of unemployment. Where efforts to meet the needs of the unmarried mother should be included in the scope of broad community planning and where special provisions are required are continuing questions. Yet, if efforts toward change are to be successful, the services must be accompanied by respect for the individual, and that respect must be both explicit in the provision and implicit in the expectation that she be a functioning and contributing member of the whole.

How the community can work toward such change has been expressed by Eli Ginzberg in another context but is certainly applicable here:

I am convinced that there are no hidden answers in the books of professors or in the desks of bureaucrats, and that there is a considerable amount of social experimentation that has to be entered upon. And the only way I know of to get social experimentation in this country is to get a public consensus that the costs of experimenting must be borne because the costs of not experimenting are intolerable.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Eli Ginzberg, "Needed: a New Perspective," *American Child*, XLVII, No. 1 (1965), 23.

# *Group Work to Help Older Adults Fulfill Citizen Roles*

by HOWARD V. EPSTEIN

THE TERM "CITIZEN" is a complex one. It implies a commitment and an opportunity. It connotes an obligation and a privilege. It implies a role in our society, and although that role is freely given, the retention of it and the dynamic fulfillment of it are dependent upon continuing study and action. The term "senior citizen" is equally complex. It implies a special category with rights and responsibilities. As applied to men and women aged sixty years plus, the term conveys a most definite challenge for social workers to understand and interpret; for with inclusion of the word "citizen" there is the implication of a specific role in society that is dependent upon a process of study and action. Those of us who serve senior citizens in day care centers recognize the many losses of role experienced by older persons and understand the vital importance of maintaining the older adult's role as an active citizen in society—many times the most important role that remains for him.

How can we give the senior citizen all the real meaning of his very special classification? How can social group workers within an agency structure help senior citizens fulfill and maintain their role as citizens, men and women who learn about, participate in, and take action on issues of public affairs?

We must recognize that there are many senior citizens who exercise their citizenship roles as individuals, but it is equally important to recognize the value of a social agency, and the group worker's conscious role therein, in helping the older adult to fulfill this role. It is that unique attribute of social group work practiced

within the framework of an agency that clearly demonstrates the real opportunity for arousing interest and channeling energies. The agency can provide a real incentive with its recognition of the strength of a collective voice and the aura of fulfillment.

Group service agencies have viewed with various degrees of commitment their obligation to help the older adult clarify his citizen role. This commitment varies with the agency's concept and expectations of the aged and is greatly influenced by the social worker's own view of the older client and his resultant interpretation to advisory committees and boards.

In examining the meaning of "role," social group workers must reach back to the basic formulation of our method and the cradle of its values—that of a democratic ideal, often sought and little realized. In the noble tradition of Grace Coyle's "higher social functioning" citizenship education presents a real challenge. We can recognize an obligation and a challenge to group workers who work with older adults to create an appropriate structure within the agency, or to use the existing structure, to help older adults fulfill this primary role of citizen.

The Golden Age Division is a day care center co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Center of Cleveland and the local section of the National Council of Jewish Women. It is the only such center specifically serving the older adult Jewish population in Cleveland. The program serves close to 600 men and women, aged sixty years plus, the majority of whom are of European birth. The program planning and policy arm of the Division is the Golden Age Advisory Committee, which comprises many members: representatives from the community-at-large; clients of the Golden Age Division; and representatives from the boards of trustees of the co-sponsoring organizations.

The Advisory Committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Community Center, which is ultimately responsible for the general program and policies of the Center as they are spelled out in the goals of the agency. Subcommittees of the Board of Trustees deal with both programmatic and administrative concerns. It is important to note that the director of the Golden Age Division is responsible to the Advisory Committee,

while the agency's program director transmits their deliberations to and from the Board of Trustees.

As a program arm of the Jewish Community Center, the Golden Age Division has an extensive program of social, recreational, and educational activities. Program, of course, is based upon an understanding of the basic goals of the center. There is an emphasis on participation in public affairs, for they are most intimately related to those over-all goals which call for the development of good citizenship through the understanding and involvement of all members in the democratic processes. There is, furthermore, an emphasis on helping the individual learn the meaning of group membership and of involvement as a responsible, participating member of the total community.

With this as a guide, the staff of the Golden Age Division helped develop a current affairs discussion group which has been important in the broad schedule of activities. This informal group has been meeting for ten years, and what has developed is a sophisticated, highly structured group under member tutelage. Over the past three years the issue most frequently discussed (as one might expect) was that of medical care for the aged. The worker was instrumental in bringing in speakers. It soon became apparent, however, that the staff was in a quandary, for even though we accepted that as a community agency we must be objective and present all sides of the issue, it was very difficult to be impartial; we identified so readily with our clients and their increasing medical needs and, specifically, we saw the validity in the Federal Government's proposed medicare legislation. Other issues, such as the reduction of transit fares for older adults, helped bring to light the real dilemma that the staff faced in helping the clients express their opinions about public affairs. (Objectivity is fine, but what about one's obligation to the client?)

At the request of the executive director the group worker presented a report to the Board of Trustees in which he asked for direction in handling areas of public affairs and social action. The board recognized the dilemma and recommended that a public affairs subcommittee of the board be established to define the role of the center and its affiliated groups, and to recommend proce-



dures that should be taken in any action on public affairs. With the creation of the subcommittee the way was paved for continuing the agency's long tradition of encouraging its clientele to take an interest in public affairs, and at the same time clarifying what should be the channels for resultant action.

The public affairs policy as formulated and approved by the Board of Trustees clearly states the goals and limits of public affairs programing with the basic areas of concerns as:

1. Those related to the public and voluntary recreational and leisure time programs, services, and resources of community . . .
2. Those related to social planning and communal fund raising . . .
3. Those related to community services to meet the needs of individuals whom the Center serves . . .
4. Those related to issues fundamental to the welfare of the Jewish group and to the survival of democracy.<sup>1</sup>

The policy statement points out that with the community-wide import of public affairs programs, the agency must be constantly sensitized to its responsibility to the total community. Since the agency is a recipient of funds from the United Appeal and the Jewish Welfare Fund, it is clearly stated that before a public stand can be taken by the agency there must be consultation and clearance with the Jewish Community Federation—the central planning body to which the agency relates. This policy indicates the need for constantly remaining objective and for providing a platform where all sides of an issue can be presented and where political endorsements are forbidden. Furthermore, it stipulates that no social action or public statement can be made by any department or membership group without prior approval of the Board of Trustees.

These policies were interpreted to the total membership of the agency through a series of public affairs newsletters which described the deliberations approved by the Board of Trustees and also recommended possible courses of action. The specific policies, in turn, have been interpreted by the group worker to the members of the Golden Age current affairs discussion group at a number of meetings.

<sup>1</sup> "Policy Statement," Public Affairs Study Committee, Jewish Community Center of Cleveland, November, 1963, p. 3.



Meanwhile, in the older adult program the *cause célèbre* continued to be that of medicare. A petition signed by the members of the Golden Age Division current affairs discussion group requested passage of the King-Anderson bill. This petition was addressed to the congressional representatives and senator. In accordance with the newly formulated agency policy, before the staff could send the petition it was presented to the program Advisory Committee of the Golden Age program by a senior citizen who was active in the discussion group. The members of this committee were divided not only on the specific issue of medicare, but as to whether the agency should contemplate matters relative to public affairs and subsequently take action on behalf of the membership.

It is important to understand that the Advisory Committee is made up of some twenty-five people with a variety of personal and professional backgrounds. There was a most obvious difference in attitude toward this issue of medicare and the issue of petitions. On this committee are three physicians who expressed among themselves different reactions to the petition on medicare. One was most articulate about his dissatisfaction with a community agency taking any position on any public affairs issue. The most outspoken of all the physicians, his stand could most closely be identified with that of the American Medical Association. A second physician kept calling for the agency objectively to present all sides of the issue. The third, who was obviously the one most sympathetic to the goals of the agency, emphasized the importance of providing a voice for the older adults in view of the study process in which they had been involved and the meaning of the agency to them. It is equally important to note that one of the client-members on the Advisory Committee agreed with the first physician about not speaking out in favor of medicare. It was interesting to note that this client's reaction was anticipated, for he was usually jealous of the member who made the presentation to the Advisory Committee.

The important task with both client-members and the other members of the Advisory Committee was constantly to focus attention not on the issue of medicare, but on the basic question of per-

mitting a constituent group to express themselves through the agency.

The innate nature of public affairs issues is controversial, and it was recognized that there would be no agreement within the Advisory Committee. However, according to procedure the question was then referred to the public affairs subcommittee, which, after reviewing the Golden Age Advisory Committee's deliberations, stated that a program Advisory Committee cannot abort the expression of the members. This action, which was supported by the Board of Trustees, clearly pointed out that if resolutions or petitions concerning public affairs issues are drafted they should be shared first with the Advisory Committee and then with the public affairs subcommittee to verify the appropriateness of the issue. The philosophy is that the clientele should be encouraged to express themselves and should be reassured that the agency is prepared to support the client in his role as a citizen.

This brief, but involved, description has capsuled many months of conscious process into a *fait accompli*. The challenge to the social group worker was to take the request of the senior citizens, in the form of the petition, and by conscious intervention within the agency's committee-board structure help fulfill a real and meaningful expression of the older person's citizenship. The challenge to the worker was to enable the Golden Age Advisory Committee to act just as he had enabled the client group to act. The group worker's task was immediately related to the program Advisory Committee, but at the same time cleared the way for final decision-making at the board level. One task was to relate the client to the board, which represents ultimate power and is the final decision-making body.

The group worker employed all the tools of his profession as an enabler, clarifier, and mobilizer—all aspects of helping everyone concerned to realize who the client is, the primary goals of the agency, and how this question relates to all of these.

The process of mobilizing the Golden Age Advisory Committee was dependent upon interpretation of the needs and rights of the older adult client, based upon who the client is and where he is in space and time. It was equally important and necessary to place in

perspective the philosophy of the Jewish Community Center as an agency with an historical commitment to the area of public affairs and the possible resultant action. It was implicit that this philosophical application would carry with it controversy by the very nature of the subject matter.

A most important element which provided a working base was recognition of the client's problem as one of the larger society. The subject of medical care for the aged helped emphasize the very common human experience of striving for more personal security. Here the foundation was laid by a process of interpretation through the years, with the tradition of an agency and a staff which respect differences; where there is the acceptance of new ideas, an acceptance of change coupled with an understanding of minority opinion.

The center has constantly been attuned to the role of primarily serving the Jewish population and helping to solidify the various religious and cultural groups within that community. In turn, it was necessary to interpret to the predominately Jewish Advisory Committee the real minority position of the older adults who were searching for medical care. Here the agency was in a unique position, for it had long served as a focal point where Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Zionist Jews, Yiddishists, Hungarians, Poles, Russians—all types of Jews, with all opinions and of all persuasions—could be accepted.

All of them [solutions] depend upon there being in the agency a recognition that thinking on public questions needs to be encouraged, that it often must lead to action and that freedom of thought requires an opportunity for such expression. A fundamental belief in democracy is required to support such activity—a belief powerful enough to combat interest which will at times attempt to control thought and especially action.<sup>2</sup>

The process of bringing these petitions into being was interpreted to the Advisory Committee as a familiar one, based upon the fundamental philosophical influence of the Jewish tradition and heritage of the center and of its clients. There was an identifi-

<sup>2</sup> Grace L. Coyle, *Group Experience and Democratic Values* (New York: Woman's Press, 1947), p. 160.

able recognition of what the members had done to arrive at the drawing up of a petition and their unanimity of thought. Here could be seen the value that Jewish tradition places on education and creative contemplation. With this current affairs discussion group the senior citizens were not only involved with an activity but were provided with an atmosphere which encouraged them to think about their own destinies.

If . . . we must stimulate truly ingenious social inventions to deal with the emerging needs of the aging and the aged, why do we strive so hard to keep older people from discussing and thinking about the few social inventions that are proposed in their behalf? In brief, if older people themselves are not encouraged to be well-versed, intelligent and creative and social thinkers and voters, how then will great social changes in attitude and program, that all of us agree are necessary, ever become a reality?<sup>3</sup>

The Jewish family is an extended entity. The interpretation to the committee members emphasized the recognition of the change in the role of the older adult in relation to his own family constellation. Adult children were "suburban hopping" while parents remained in the old neighborhoods. Increasingly, the grandparent role was limited to a Friday night or special holiday visit. A change in role was further emphasized in relation to work. Here we were serving a group of predominately European-born men and women whose entire life patterns were devoted to making a livelihood for the security of themselves and their families. There was very little time to prepare for retirement. An important role remaining to them was that of a citizen.

It is important to recognize the conflict of values that was evidenced within the Golden Age Advisory Committee. This probably was most noticeable in the cleavage between one physician and some of the other members. One cannot minimize the power of the AMA values, for their expression was clearly and securely formulated and expressed with the total committee members' knowledge of the large professional backing. The presence of a variety of givers of values made it important, if not necessary, for the group

<sup>3</sup> Charles E. Odell, "Attitudes toward Political Activities among the Aging," in Wilma Donahue and Clark Tibbitts, eds., *Politics of Age* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1962), p. 29.

worker to clarify the basic goal of the Advisory Committee, namely, as a task-centered group to focus on the needs of the client and fully to understand the ultimate accountability to the client. The group worker had to be supportive to the committee members, reassuring them that the very nature of public affairs issues is controversial and, therefore, subject to a great deal of emotion and subjectivity. The worker geared his action toward freeing the committee members to function in relation to a task. The worker had to emphasize that the Advisory Committee's function was not to endorse medicare, but rather to consider the right of members to express a unified concern about an issue of public affairs with the encouragement of and further fulfillment of the older person's responsibilities of citizenship.

As the worker went about his professional job of interpreting to the committee the meaning of this expression from the clients, a continued examination of values was necessary. It became immediately apparent that the values of the worker coincided most directly with those of the clients, and that there were conflicts between the values of some of the committee members and those of the worker. The members of the Advisory Committee represent a multitude of attitudes and personal experiences. They are asked to serve on the committee because of their experiences and possible expertise or identification with the problems of the aging.

Two important motivating factors attract lay persons to our agencies. One is the obvious satisfaction of being identified with a social cause, and the ability to make a positive contribution to the community. The other—less frequently discussed—is the element of recognition, prestige, and power gained through community activity.<sup>4</sup>

The individual motivations for serving on the committee were diffuse, and it was necessary to convey to the committee members their obligation to the program they represented. All of this calls for a vital dimension, and that is the attempt to instill a sense of responsibility in the committee membership. Here this means understanding why older persons affiliate with a day care center for older adults. It means interpreting that the older adult, at this

<sup>4</sup> Arnold J. Auerbach, "Aspirations of Power People and Agency Goals," *Social Work*, VI, No. 1 (1961), 66.



center, at least, is searching not only for activity, but for an opportunity to express himself about his world.

There was also the realization that the Board of Trustees had the final word in determining policies. It was, therefore, necessary in great measure to interpret to the members of the Advisory Committee their specific role not only in this issue, but in relation to the total structure of the agency as well. It was necessary to emphasize that with the size and complexity of the agency, a program Advisory Committee serves as the first line of defense, being closer to a specific area of program and supposedly more sensitized to the problems facing the clients of that program. The functions of the Advisory Committee had to be spelled out as follows:

1. To recommend matters of program policy for a specific area of Center service
2. To study and review special developments in regard to program planning
3. To organize and conduct special projects, events, and activities
4. To make recommendations concerning new program activities developed from time to time
5. To conduct periodic self-evaluation of the program
6. To submit reports and recommendations to the . . . Jewish Community Center Board of Trustees.<sup>5</sup>

The interpretation, pertinent to the understanding of agency goals, had to be clarified to the Advisory Committee and ultimately to the board. The action of the board in clearing the way for channeling the client's voice had to be intimately related to the goals of the agency and to the place of public affairs as they relate to these basic objectives. The importance of interpretation pinpointed the fundamental issue of the responsibility of the agency in helping the client be an integral part of society's democratic structure.

The action, as finally taken by the board, consisted of due consideration by all necessarily involved committees that could study and review the issue itself, and the meaning of the issue for the clients. After final approval of the board it was reemphasized at a subsequent meeting of the Golden Age Advisory Committee that

<sup>5</sup> "Outline of Functions of Program Advisory Committees," in *Board of Trustees Manual*, Jewish Community Center of Cleveland (1963), p. 17.



this was not an endorsement of medicare by the entire agency, but by a constituent group. (It is important to note, however, that as a result of this impetus the Board of Trustees issued a resolution endorsing the King-Anderson medicare bill.)

Presently, the result of all this has had minimal kinds of meaning for the members of the older adult program and, more specifically, for members of the current affairs discussion group, which initiated the petition. Those clients with leadership roles in the Golden Age Division have indicated their satisfaction that the center provides a setting where public affairs issues can be publicly discussed, with an avenue for action. It is interesting to note that there have not been other issues which have resulted in action being taken by the older adult discussion group. However, the group worker now has a clearly defined base from which to practice which demonstrates the values and obligations inherent to the fulfillment of citizenship.

What has been discussed should in many respects be familiar to those of us in group service agencies who have the multiplicities of responsibilities of working directly with clients as well as with committee and board structures. I would imagine that the philosophy underlying the action is inherently familiar to all of us and our agencies. The challenge, however, concerns the translation of philosophical commitment into philosophical fulfillment. There must be the realization of a linkage between the client and the board which is responsible for final decision-making. There is in this process the enrichment of understanding of the structure of the agency and a realization by the clients of authority, and how all of this ultimately relates to the fulfillment of agency goals. It is here that the sincerity of an agency's commitment comes to bear, namely, so that goals relating to citizenship development and personality growth are translated into meaningful and concrete action. One of our clients who serves as president of a senior citizen club group possibly best stated this as follows:

I have a little more responsibility than the average member, but I also have more privileges. As president of a club I am a member of the Golden Age Advisory Committee. I'm also invited to other special affairs. On occasions I come in contact with a different class of people.

These people are above my level. They consist of staff members and members of the board, civic leaders, and others, so whenever I attend one of these meetings, I always feel a little richer, and I don't mean by money. I gain something more valuable than money—and that is knowledge, wisdom, and education . . .

In reflecting upon this experience it seems important to realize that a professional social group worker brings to bear all that he knows or believes in as he effects action based upon successful interpretation to boards and advisory committees. This is based upon a great deal of self-awareness, and, equally, upon his knowledge of individuals and groups, and how change is brought about. This is tied up intimately with his ability to interpret the client's needs and his conviction of the agency's obligation to the client. As a social group worker he must be readily available and firm in his conviction concerning the process of intervention on behalf of his clients, concomitantly understanding the conflicts and confusions which will arise from committee members. The social group worker must be able to interpret the long-reaching goals of deliberations, and be able to interpret the community philosophy of the agency. The worker must ultimately work for a shared agreement of primary goals between himself and committee members. Only then can there be movement. Only then can the group worker help the senior citizen fulfill his citizen role.

# Group Work Practice in a Juvenile Detention Center<sup>1</sup>

by THEODORE GOLDBERG

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL GROUP WORK as a method of social work practice in a wide variety of institutional settings is now reasonably well established.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, there has been little discussion of its potential in the temporary detention facility for juveniles commonly found in most metropolitan communities.

Since any helping method is influenced greatly by the setting in which it is used, it is important to note at the outset that the juvenile detention center offers a secure living situation for a brief period of time to offenders in need of such custody. As has been noted elsewhere,<sup>3</sup> it is not a long-term treatment center, nor is it usually designed for the care of dependent and neglected children.

<sup>1</sup> The services described here have been provided, since September, 1960, by social work students placed for their field work at the Marion County Juvenile Center in Indianapolis, under the jurisdiction of the Marion County Juvenile Court. The author serves as the field work instructor. Special thanks go to Mr. Virgil Brand, the Center's superintendent, and his staff without whose patience, understanding, and continuing support this program would not have been possible.

<sup>2</sup> For general reference, see Gisela Konopka, *Group Work in the Institution* (New York: Whiteside, Inc., and William Morrow and Co., 1954); Louise A. Frey, "Social Group Work in Hospitals," in *New Perspectives on Services to Groups: Theory, Organization, Practice* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1961), pp. 92-103; Hyman J. Weiner, "The Hospital, the Ward, and the Patient as Clients: Use of the Group Method," *Social Work*, IV, No. 4 (1959), 57-64; Grace L. Coyle, "Group Work in Psychiatric Settings: Its Roots and Branches," *ibid.*, IV, No. 1 (1959), 74-81; John Matsushima, "Group Work with Emotionally Disturbed Children in Residential Treatment," *ibid.*, VII, No. 1 (1962), 62-70; Ruth R. Middleman, "Social Group Work in a Maternity Home," *Child Welfare*, XXXVIII, No. 2 (1959), 13-18.

<sup>3</sup> National Probation and Parole Association, *Standards and Guides for the Detention of Children and Youth* (2d ed.; New York: the Association, 1961).

While the child is detained, the court seeks to understand the child and his situation so that it can make as effective a disposition as community resources permit. It is hoped that the detention will be a therapeutic experience designed to begin or continue society's efforts to rehabilitate the offender and to prevent recidivism. In line with these institutional goals, the social group work program had the following purposes <sup>4</sup> in mind:

1. *It sought to facilitate adjustment to detention.*

One goal was to maximize the positive potentials and to minimize the stresses and strains. It goes without saying that the more energy invested by the youngster in fighting detention, the less he has available for utilizing the experience productively. The more that he tends to view the institution and its personnel as punitive and antiyouth, the more difficult it will be for him to utilize the helping resources available. We had no aspirations that we could make the child happy to be detained but we did hope to assist him to accept as fully as possible the fact of, and the reasons for, his detention.

2. *It sought to further diagnostic understanding.*

The group workers helped to collect data which might be useful to the court in planning toward the child's future. Not uncommonly, this is a basic purpose of the temporary detention facility.<sup>5</sup> It was hoped that the opportunities for intimate observation of, and participation in, the group living situation would provide an understanding of the child which would not be readily accessible elsewhere. Such diagnostic impressions would complement those collected by other staff and departments.

3. *It sought to contribute to the beginning treatment process.*

It was hoped that through the therapeutic handling of individuals in the group-living situation, the children would develop greater insight into the meaning of their peer and adult relationships and further, that they would clarify their value systems as they conflict with the world about them and increase their concern and desire to do something about the factors which have produced

<sup>4</sup> This listing of objectives represents our current thinking. Some purposes were apparent to us in the beginning; others have grown out of experience.

<sup>5</sup> National Probation and Parole Association, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

delinquent behavior. An integral part of this purpose was the desire to facilitate more active participation by the child in planning that will affect his future. It was thought that as a result of our relationships with the children, they could be helped to see the advantages in more open sharing and active participation with the probation officer and others who were making decisions which would influence their future lives.

4. *It sought to meet normal growth needs.*

There was recognition that regardless of the degree of delinquency, these youngsters were in the midst of a crucial developmental phase and that confinement frequently frustrates normal growth needs. The provision of opportunities for choice in some areas of their daily lives, for self-expression and the development of leadership qualities, and for participation in activities that offer a sense of achievement is illustrative of the needs our services tried to meet.

5. *It sought to influence the institutional milieu.*

Ways were sought to assist in the development of a climate which facilitated the achievement of over-all objectives. It was obvious that our limited service would have little positive effect unless what we were doing both supplemented and was supplemented by the efforts of the institution as a whole. We sought to participate with others in such a way that the maximum amount of cooperation could be secured.

It is probably clear that this listing of objectives is a mixture of ends and means. The goals of understanding individuals and creating the right agency climate are indispensable means to the end of individual growth and change. We have presented them in this fashion because they seem to flow so naturally from the setting in which they developed. In actual practice, our efforts to understand the children were as much on our minds as helping them to adjust to detention.

Some additional background regarding the physical setting and the history of these services is necessary. The Center's physical plant was completed in 1959. There are six living units, four for boys and two for girls. In 1964 the Center served 2,525 children, with an average daily population of 128.9 and an average length of

stay of 20.1 days.<sup>6</sup> Each living unit is self-contained with individual sleeping rooms and a large play area. Food is prepared in, and delivered from, a central kitchen. The program includes a school staffed by the local school system, medical, dental, religious, and recreational services. The social service department is currently composed of four full-time social caseworkers. Major functions of the department are to help children adjust to and use detention; to coordinate institutional resources, including considerable consultation and collaboration with other personnel; and to serve as liaison with the court and its staff. The balance between the youngsters' needs and available resources is, perhaps, average when contrasted with other similar agencies. Major problems include a high rate of turnover of child-care staff, the detaining of some children for whom the setting is inappropriate, and a total population too large for the institution to cope with adequately.

Nearly five years ago the Indiana University Division of Social Service was interested in expanding field work training opportunities for group work students, and I was assigned to develop them in this setting. Since there was no existing group work service and at that time only one full-time detention social worker, there began a dialogue about what the students might be assigned to do. The staff most knowledgeable and closest to the children discussed current needs and problems within the institution in relation to what social work practice might achieve as well as what were appropriate assignments for field work. Needless to say, the "answers" are much clearer in retrospect than they were at the time or at other stages of the process. Fifteen students have since had field work placements in this setting, and the comments about group work practice which follow are clearly colored by the fact that this has not been a full-time, ongoing service by paid staff.

It is clear that social services developed in this setting would want to seek individual change. But how? Social workers work with individuals, groups, and organizations. We often attempt to help an individual change by working with him alone; at other times we place him in a group setting or relate to a total institu-

<sup>6</sup> Statistics are taken from the *Annual Report, 1964, Marion County Juvenile Court and Center*.



tion or some of its parts. Not uncommonly, we use some combination of these and other approaches. It is not surprising that in searching for ways to help, we looked especially for the most relevant group settings within which to attempt to seek the goal of individual change. This is not to say that the worker would or could limit his efforts to the use of one specific helping process directed at one client system. The degree to which our specializing predisposes us to fit people into a specific helping method rather than to draw on a variety of processes to help them change is increasingly relevant today. We tried to strike a balance through direct services to clients and participation in the administrative processes.

#### DIRECT SERVICES TO CLIENTS

Several kinds of direct services to clients have been offered by the group workers in the past several years. The following are illustrative:

1. *The group as a whole.*—The group of primary concern to the staff was the living unit, housing from fifteen to more than thirty members. This group, analogous to a ward or cottage in other institutions, is the one in which the members spend much of their time. It is the child's "family" during his detention, and within it he eats, sleeps, and plays. If his problems and needs are dealt with satisfactorily in this group situation, it is likely that he will make good use of the total institutional experience. In so far as his problems and needs are not met, the reverse may be expected. All the group workers were assigned at least some responsibility for direct work with one living unit. The frequency of contacts varied between two and three sessions weekly.

At the outset, the problem was to establish a professional helping relationship with the youngsters. The group workers described themselves as social workers but differentiated their functions and method from those of the probation officer and the caseworkers within the institution. Frequently, the development of this beginning relationship seemed most achievable through activity-centered programs, and, as a result, the students planned activities in which the majority of the children participated. In addition to

group discussions, these sessions included active games in the gym, crafts, and a combination of quiet and active games in the living unit. The response to the group workers in these units was almost universally positive. It seemed to make no difference how apprehensive the workers were initially, the youngsters were eager to see them. This points up one of the well-known effects of detention upon adolescents: confinement with little opportunity for free choice produces tension and boredom. Thus the initial response to the workers can be explained by the youngsters' desire for outlets to satisfy normal growth needs.

Within a relatively short time other helping potentials began to develop through providing services to the living units directly. Youngsters who were most frightened by detention and most apprehensive about the future began to utilize the students in clarifying these issues for themselves: "Why am I here?" "Why hasn't the probation officer visited?" "Why does he think I shouldn't go home?" "Why can't my parents visit more frequently?" "Why does it take so long?" The more pressing these questions were, and particularly in cases where individuals had not found other staff members with whom they could discuss them, the more use of the workers was made.

As the relationships within the group stabilized, there were additional opportunities for the group worker to participate in the interacting process of the group living situation to achieve certain purposes. There was often much conflict and tension within these groups. In the process of daily life in close proximity, emotions were expressed and displaced in these interpersonal relationships. The group workers handled as much of this as was possible. At points, the best they could do was to set limits on how the conflict could be expressed. At other times, it was possible to explore the conflicts sufficiently so that the individuals involved could completely resolve them.

A major requirement for achieving almost any objective for individuals in groups is the development of a sufficient level of cohesiveness within the group. This opens up potentials which would not otherwise be present. The achievement of an adequate level of cohesiveness within the unit living group was an elusive goal of

the group work service in this setting. Because of the high rate of turnover and the heterogeneity of several of the living units, it was difficult to find ways to produce the desired group bond. We knew that such "we" feeling might emerge out of the mutual recognition that the group had the potential for meeting members' needs.<sup>7</sup> The group workers struggled to identify the need-meeting potentials of the groups and to make these as explicit as possible to the youngsters. The achievement of this group condition was often influenced significantly by the arrival and departure of youngsters, a factor which the group workers could not control. It was apparent, however, that through the appropriate use of activities, at first largely worker-introduced and then increasingly involving the members of the group in discussion and choices, there began to develop a level of group feeling which might be used to enhance the positive potentials of the group living experience. As the group meant more to the members, it was more likely that isolated youngsters would receive support. Moreover, domineering and manipulative members would be more apt to confront obstacles, in the form of group solidarity, to their efforts narcissistically to use the group. In this connection, it should be noted that the group was the same whether the social group work student happened to be the leader or whether it was led by other institutional staff members. As cohesiveness within the group began to develop, it often produced better communication between the group and the staff.

Since the unit group experience represented such a crucial piece of the institutional environment, the group workers attempted to help it serve over-all goals. Their efforts were somehow to relate to this rapidly changing collection of individuals in such a way that they would become a *group*—a significant setting within which the individual's problems might be worked on and his needs met. The workers tried to help the groups to agree that they wanted something (even if it was only a gym period where everyone had a fair chance to participate without fighting) and then to

<sup>7</sup> Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander, eds., *Group Dynamics—Research and Theory* (2d ed.; Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Co., 1960). The authors say that "the valence of a group will be increased by heightening the awareness of a member . . . that he can fulfill his needs by belonging to the group" (p. 78).

organize themselves to get it. While the specifics varied from unit to unit and worker to worker, this was the essence of the process in working with the unit groups.

2. *Subgroups.*—On occasions when the living unit housed more than thirty members, it became extremely difficult to work with the entire group, a factor which was further complicated by heterogeneity along other dimensions. For instance, one of the boys' units included youngsters from eight through fourteen years of age. Wherever it seemed appropriate, an effort was made to work with significant subgroups of units that had already been assigned to one of the group workers. In this boys' unit, during the first semester, one worker met with the entire unit two sessions per week. In the second semester, as the size of the unit increased, it was divided by age, and the worker met with the younger children once a week, the older children once a week, and the entire unit once a week. This made it possible to individualize the members of the group to a much higher degree than had formerly been the case. While to some extent this did impede the development of a group bond, nonetheless it stimulated the development of closer relationships among subgroup members which was especially useful for the younger children and also contributed to their accessibility to other staff.

Another use of subgroups occurred in the older girls' living unit when several girls were awaiting transfer to a state correctional institution. The interim was longer than usual, and eight or nine older adolescent girls were awaiting transfer for several weeks. This created distinctive subgroups and produced a great deal of conflict, with the "uncommitted" children being very much threatened by the "committed" children. The social group worker therefore met with each subgroup separately as well as with the group as a whole. Results similar to those which had occurred with the boys were noted. Communication between the worker, other staff, and the subgroups was markedly facilitated. A much fuller understanding of their responses to this situation was procured. As a result of the expression of their feelings and reactions and the acceptance of them by the institution and its staff, there was some reduction in tension and conflict.

A somewhat different approach was used at one point. It was decided to form a small group of younger boys for whom, it was hypothesized, the detention experience created the greatest stress. The group worker met twice weekly with this group throughout a semester. While the problem of helping the group develop a significant bond was accentuated by the fact that this subgroup was together as a group only when the worker met with them, it was thought that for many of these individuals the experience had made an important contribution. In the first place, it provided an opportunity for them to be separated from the larger group living situation in which adjustment was more complicated. This produced a better opportunity for self-expression and participation in activities which were designed primarily in terms of their developmental stage. Among the products of this group experience was the drainage of tension which developed out of the daily life stresses. A good deal of griping and complaining occurred during the group sessions. As the worker began to understand and handle them it became apparent that these problems often had not been expressed directly to other staff members outside the group. It might be mentioned that this illustrates how a person's location in group and organizational social structures often influences how accessible and responsive he may be to efforts to help him.<sup>8</sup> In this case, the youngsters were apparently so threatened by their group living situation, and so powerless in the larger unit group's social structure, that they had been unable to discuss some problems until this group was formed. To some extent, conflict between the younger and older members was brought into the open and handled by both of the subgroups, the social group worker, and child care personnel. While the "normal" antagonisms between younger and older subgroups living in close proximity were not eliminated, they did seem to be reduced, and the precipitating factors seemed

<sup>8</sup> Howard W. Polsky, *Cottage Six—the Social System of Delinquent Boys in Residential Treatment* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1962). See especially Chap. 5, in which the author says: "A powerful reference group [the cottage group] is thus created and interposed between the child and the staff, and challenges that staff's practices, values, and aspirations" (p. 88). See also Norman A. Polansky, "Small-Group Theory: Implications for Casework Research," in Leonard S. Kogan, ed., *Social Science Theory and Social Work Research* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1960), pp. 109-21.



to be better understood by all parties. Some of these youngsters were very much supported by their close relationship with the worker.

The above illustrations reflect the more formal work with subgroups in instances where the subgroup met on a regular basis. Obviously, subgroups were in existence at all times whether we worked with them or not, and they were often instrumental in providing the human responses which individual members needed from each other. As is true of group work practice in any setting, we tried to be aware of these subgroups and their effects and often we related to them in less formal ways as an indispensable ingredient of work with the group as a whole. In a way, this group setting resembled a group of teen-agers using a game room or canteen in a community center. The group is large, membership changes, and yet there is evidence of structure growing out of their common life together. Work with subgroups at points is vital to facilitating goal achievement.

An illustration will clarify the process. In correctional institutions the group members commonly adapt to the stresses of this experience by banding together both to "fight" the adults and to "rule the roost." If one can, one tries to belong to the "ins" and get "kicks" by abusing the "outs." The existence of such a subgroup obviously gets in the way of social work purposes, and the worker must try to limit or prevent this. One level of intervention would be to relate to this subgroup. Can the worker break through the wall of resistance they set up? Can he involve them in providing more constructive leadership within the group? Group work practice in this setting involved considerable effort of this sort, perhaps because the group as a whole was of such a fluid, amorphous type.

No single approach to work with subgroups has emerged as "best." In each living unit, decisions about where such an approach seemed useful were based on judgments about the needs of the living unit group and its members and the readiness of a given group worker to try to help. The latter is a variable to which we pay insufficient attention. The children, group workers, and other staff were usually involved in any decision-making process which



led to a significant change in the patterns of working with subgroups and the group as a whole.

3. *Individuals.*—It is apparent that group work practice in such a setting involves considerable opportunity and need for work with individuals. The children are usually involuntarily institutionalized following some crisis. Their confrontation with the police, court, and the institution often compounds their problems initially. The picture, even dispassionately painted, is one of a frightened group of children living in a highly regimented setting and trying to stretch their adaptive capacities to cope with these very tough realities. Add to this their limited capacities and it is clear that they need considerable outside help. The staff resources in this and most other settings are never completely adequate, and the group workers were confronted with a seemingly never ending series of large and small problems. Some of the problems were related to the group living situation and were expressed quite naturally while the group worker was present. Others were unrelated to the group and were concerned with future planning.

We have said that it is normally the caseworker's job to serve as the liaison to the court and its probation staff. When a youngster is concerned about his future, expressing it either directly or by acting out in other ways, it is usually the caseworker who helps. For at least two reasons, the group workers were also actively involved. In addition to the limited time problem, the group workers had relationships with many of the members and were physically present at the "right" time. It is not possible to tell institutionalized children always to "save" their problems for certain times of the day or week or for certain staff members. This is why most institutions pay more attention to the total daily life and milieu of the setting. Whom the child feels close to and when he feels like talking are partly individual matters.

In the midst of a game in the gym, a boy cries because he loses. If the worker is understanding, the child will often pick this time to say something about his family relationships, or how he feels about himself, or where he hopes to go when he leaves the institution. In addition to assisting the child to adjust to this setting, the group worker can use the situation to search for a better under-

standing of the child, his self-image, hopes, and aspirations and he can help the child to reach toward the probation officer, a crucial person in his future. Has he mentioned any of this to the probation officer? Does he know why the probation officer needs to understand him? Would he like help in telling his probation officer? Much has been made of a crying episode in the midst of a game. The help surrounding this incident may be the most significant thing that happens between the group worker and the child while he is institutionalized, and, while it happens in a quasi-one-to-one setting, the opportunity develops because the child was a part of a group.

In addition to the opportunities to observe children during group sessions, the group worker had access to all of the other staff and their records. Often this helped him to be aware of youngsters whose behavior indicated that they were not receiving adequate help. Not infrequently, the group worker would be asked to help the youngster because he was in the best position to do so. Perhaps the child who was isolated and very upset would not talk to anyone else. Or sometimes the nature of the problem was such that only the professional staff were able to help the child, and the caseworker was not available. The group work staff were asked to identify those children who seemed "needy" and were not receiving adequate attention. In a sense, they were encouraged to be "unhappy" unless they thought the children were being adequately served. We have had some difficulty developing clear categories for the kinds of problems which should be referred to other institutional personnel or to the probation officer and the points at which referral should be made. Perhaps this grew out of the part-time character of our work. We did not, however, try to adhere to rigid jurisdictional lines. The result has been that individual group workers have vacillated from trying to be everything to everybody to being available not at all for "individual problems." Neither extreme is satisfactory, and this is one of the stresses of practice in this setting. The challenge is to find the midpoint which best serves the client.

This elaboration has identified three levels of worker intervention: the individual, the subgroup, and the group as a whole.

While interacting with individuals and subgroups, the social group worker should not forget that such interventions must be related to the whole group. For if they are not, many of the group's influencing potentials are not realized. It should be noted that we have attempted to utilize other group settings than the living group and its subgroups. Group orientation programs, a newspaper group composed of representatives from each of the living units, and a discussion group for older boys who were causing many problems in the unit have been tried, and others have been considered. Usually we have decided that with our limited resources, the group workers should devote the major part of their energies to influencing the living group experience. The newspaper group has recently been staffed by school personnel, and the group orientation sessions are often conducted by caseworkers and child care staff.

#### PARTICIPATION IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

The group workers also tried to be team members for it was obvious that any significant achievement within this institution was going to be based on the quality of our collaborative relationships with other personnel. One of the complications of institutional programs is a function of the complexity of the many roles and responsibilities delegated to a wide variety of staff members and the problems involved in helping everybody to pull together on behalf of the children being served. It was a part of our conscious purpose from the beginning to influence in any way possible the functioning of all staff members both in relation to their interactions with the children and to their cooperative efforts. The direct services involved heavy responsibility for working with other personnel who had contacts with the youngsters in the groups. The following illustrate a few ways in which this was attempted:

1. *Collaborative contacts.*—The social group workers who had responsibility for working with clients in groups spent considerable time attempting to assist other personnel. Each student was responsible for keeping up to date with the daily logs which were kept by the child care staff in each of the living units for which they were responsible. Through observation and through direct

contacts with the children students became quickly aware of problems in relationships between child care personnel and individual youngsters. While the problems involved were many and sometimes the skill of the social group workers inadequate, a good deal was achieved. As a result of direct contacts with the youngsters, a certain sophistication evolved about what made them behave as they did as well as effective techniques for handling them. This understanding was used frequently in contacts with child care personnel and with the social caseworkers. Youngsters themselves were helped to see why they were getting into difficulty within the living unit and what they would need to do in order to effect some change. Child care personnel were helped to understand what the behavior patterns seemed to indicate and how other techniques for handling children might be more effective.

In most cases, the students did not have direct supervisory responsibility. This was a voluntary collaborative relationship. The problem was to help someone else to see what he did not seem to see. Since all records of group sessions were shared with the superintendent and social workers, other modifications occurred through the normal supervisory structure.

On several occasions when communication between children and child care personnel was noticeably blocked, these staff members were invited to participate in group discussions during which the problems were aired and an effort was made to distinguish between the "real" and the "imagined" and to arrive at some plans for resolving the conflict.

2. *In-service training of child care personnel.*—One of the group workers who had prior experience as a child care staff member in other institutional settings was assigned to work directly with child care personnel. Her responsibilities included twice monthly meetings with the four supervisors of child care personnel and twice monthly sessions with the male child care staff. Out of earlier collaborative experience it seemed clear that there were points at which movement could occur only if the group worker had "official" responsibility for working with other staff members. This was achieved in this assignment, which was developed in direct consultation with child care personnel. They were asked if they

wanted such sessions, what kinds of sessions they would like to have, what purposes would be served through such sessions, and their interests in so far as specific content was concerned were continuously solicited. While this assignment lasted for only one semester, the response of the child care personnel to these group sessions was very positive. They indicated at the conclusion of the student's field work that they hoped some means for continuation of this organizational pattern could be found.

The facilitation of communication between child care personnel and other staff was a major goal of these meetings. As was mentioned above, one of the problems in institutional settings generally is the difficulty human beings seem to have in working effectively together. This problem is especially acute for child care personnel who generally have the least preparation for their jobs and, in many ways, the most complex and difficult responsibilities. Sessions with both staff groups were frequently devoted to problems in collaboration within the institution: Why did the nurse act in a certain way? How do we solve problems of difference of opinion between child care persons who work with the same children at different times? How much information should child care staff have about children in their care? Why might social workers not share everything?

A second major content area had to do with the youngsters themselves. Child care personnel were frequently at a loss to understand the bizarre behavior frequently observed in the living units. The stress of supervising the units for eight hours a day produced a tendency to fall back on simplistic explanations and answers. This tendency was a subject of concern in staff meetings. Why do children wet the bed? What does it mean when children deliberately disobey the rules? Why does Johnny cry at the slightest provocation? What accounts for this youngster's role as a scapegoat within the group? At points other institutional personnel, including the psychologist, nurse, and superintendent, were brought into these discussions to facilitate collaboration and contribute to the total knowledge available.

Highly related would be the content devoted to handling these problems. It is not enough to understand why Johnny is a scape-



goat or wets the bed or is always fighting. The unit staff member needs to live in these units with the youngsters and to exert some control over what occurs. As a result, a good deal of time was devoted to a discussion of appropriate responses in given situations. These were related to the objectives of the institutional program and helped to offset the tendency on the part of the child care personnel to focus entirely on the suppression of irritating symptoms.

3. *The institutional milieu.*—Every social welfare organization has its frailties, and the social worker expresses his commitment to people by trying intelligently to participate in and influence his organization so that its helping potentials (and his own) are released as fully as possible. We were not there to “work with the organization,” but we did try to participate within its processes with the above idea in mind.

As was noted above, the superintendent received duplicate copies of all records produced by the social group workers. In addition, regular conferences were scheduled between the superintendent (more recently the director of social service) and the field instructor to make sure that nothing that was being done in one area would “upset the applecart” in another. This was done also to facilitate the maximum use of the insights into the institutional program and its effects, which were gained as a result of the field unit’s work. Scores of issues were discussed over this period. Gaps in clarity about the function of the institution were identified and dealt with as were confusions about rules, regulations, and policies. Gaps in the resources of the institution and their effects on the clients were noted, and means for modification were discussed. It hardly seems necessary to say that adequate answers were not found for even most of the questions raised. The important thing is that there was an atmosphere of free discussion between the field work unit and other administrative personnel which greatly enhanced the learning potentials for the student workers. They were able to see in operation what it means to participate responsibly in the administrative processes, and the problems that were inherent in attempting to change institutional programs and the effects of inadequate resources. Moreover, this free discussion was indispensable to making any necessary modifications in the environment.



In addition, the student group workers participated in staff meetings when possible. Issues and problems which grew out of practice were referred to the staff meeting, and the group workers took part in total staff efforts to find the most effective solutions. This past semester, a difference between the student group workers and other personnel grew out of an incident in which the youngsters were searched following an intergroup activity. As the staff members directly involved pursued the problem, it became apparent that this was much more complicated than whether or not to search the children in this instance. It embraced the whole question of when and how to "trust" and "risk" in human relationships and how to use one's philosophy about this matter to encourage individual growth and change. While this is hardly a routine problem, it illustrates the sorts of issues which have been brought to the staff group and, I hope, suggests the impressive amount of encouragement we felt as a result of the administration's willingness for us to "rock the boat." Needless to add, our effectiveness in using such opportunities was dependent on how willing we were to listen as well as talk.

I think this discussion points up the kinds of competence which social group workers can bring to temporary detention facilities for delinquents. At no time has the student unit been able to cover all the living units. This has meant that never more than half of the youngsters benefited directly. Perhaps as important, however, have been the limits to our influence on the institutional milieu. It would seem self-evident that it is difficult to help an organization when one is related to only some of its parts.

As Cressey has suggested, "many traits exhibited by individual staff members and inmates are properties of the *organization*, not of the person in question . . . it follows logically that if the traits are to be changed the organization, not the person, must be made the object of modification."<sup>9</sup> The illustration above is a case in point. To what extent is the freedom to trust a client an individual worker's or an organization's problem? Can we help the staff member to change, or does the organization somehow require him to be that way?

<sup>9</sup> Donald R. Cressey, ed., *The Prison: Studies in Institutional Organization and Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 8.

Services which permeated all the living units in the institution would probably have produced more substantial results. No doubt, the extent to which an institution is equipped to serve as a diagnostic and treatment arm of a court, and the balance between its needs and resources, would also influence the ways in which social group work might be utilized.

The fact that a field work unit worked with the Center has no doubt influenced the types of services which have evolved, the choices we have made regarding the use of personnel, and the degree to which the services could be fully integrated into the institutional program.

The problem of achieving adequate teamwork in such institutions is abundantly clear, and even the most skillful personnel have difficulty helping it to happen. This is not surprising in view of the disturbed children and the limited amount of professional leadership available to help child care staff, who have the most difficult jobs and the least preparation. In this program, the caseworkers and group workers were aware of, and tried to cope with, the problem. Yet, it seemed almost uncontrollable at points, and where key staff are not functioning as a team, the child suffers. The detention experience may well contribute to the likelihood that the youngster will return. It certainly will not help him learn to trust society.

Would a different use of social workers help with this problem? Can we help the caseworker move closer to the living unit group and its daily life problems for children and for staff? Would such proximity make it possible to relate these institutional experiences more effectively to the planning for the child which is proceeding simultaneously, if often at a distance? Would some mixing of the roles of caseworker and group worker as discussed above, performed by *one person*, result in more efficacious collaboration and better services within the institution and greater continuity between this temporary institutionalization and the experiences that follow the child's release?

If such results are theoretically possible, are there staff who can bring them about? Is it possible that the workers in such cases would be spread too thin, having to cover more than they can

manage? Is there a subtle wisdom in our traditional separation of these roles: workers who concentrate on the institutional experience; those who concentrate on postdischarge planning; and often others who build bridges between the two? What is certain is that the present use of trained manpower in this particular institution is unable to achieve what is desired. Perhaps other fields in social welfare with similar problems have something to teach the correctional field in this regard. It would seem that the need in this setting for a social worker who brings a variety of skills in addition to his primary method is in line with current practice demands throughout social welfare.

Periodically in the past five years, one of the students has asked (usually prefaced by some thought about how much he is enjoying his placement): "Is it really group work?" Normally, I panic, talk quite a bit, don't answer the question, and end up by saying something like what is most important is learning to help people. The current frame of reference statement of the National Association of Social Workers refers to social group work as "that method of social work in which the group experience is utilized by the worker as the primary medium of practice, for the purpose of effecting the social functioning, growth or change of the group members."<sup>10</sup> We try to do this, although it is obvious that the "group" is somewhat different from those that group workers are often used to. Students have moved into this setting with a variety of career aspirations and from it to employment in the broad spectrum of social welfare organizations. My feeling is that they have not been handicapped in the sense that there are many gaps in their preparation as a result of the specifics of this setting. Actually, we have often thought there were some advantages, but we do not know for certain; and this is a fascinating subject about which there is less certainty than we wish.

We think this is fruitful work and we encourage others to try it. The temporary detention facility for juveniles is often viewed as offering a somewhat less critical service. After all, the children are

<sup>10</sup> Margaret E. Hartford, ed., *Working Papers toward a Frame of Reference for Social Group Work* (New York: National Association of Social Workers, Inc., 1964), p. 4.

dealt with on a short-time basis, and our limited professional manpower tends to move into long-term programs. They are, of course, desperately needed there, but this setting does provide a real opportunity to work with children in crisis situations. We have found it an exciting setting for both education and practice.

# *Effecting Value Change in Race Relations through Group Service Agencies*

by LOUISE A. BROWN and  
MARGARET E. HARTFORD

GROUP-SERVICE AGENCIES, like the Y's, Scouts, Jewish Community Centers, and other youth- and adult-serving organizations, have a rare opportunity and a great responsibility to participate in the rapid social change in American life—the integration of Negroes into the total life of the community.

Because of the way in which many communities have developed in recent years, there is a tendency for residential patterns of cities to be racially segregated. The upward and outward mobile white populations at all economic levels have found it possible to isolate themselves in suburban communities or insulate themselves in ethnic communities. This phenomenon has made a casual or natural interracial experience virtually impossible. Therefore, those agencies whose services range across neighborhood, inner city, and suburban lines have the particular task of establishing structure and program that will facilitate value and attitude change for the people who compose the agency board and committee members, staff, volunteers, and participants.

Frequently, the people who constitute a branch, center, or district of these organizations have had such socially isolated experiences in their families, among their friends, in school, church, and other activities, that they have not had contacts with Negroes. They may feel that the civil rights struggle is not their concern.

Where they recognize that there is a problem of race relations, they frequently do not view it as their responsibility or problem, but rather see it as the task for those who work within the inner city. The agency task, therefore, is to develop an awareness of the many-faceted nature of the problem, to create a sense of responsibility in assuming some leadership for social change, and to collaborate in the integration process.

Bringing about value change will not be simple or easy, even for those who are deeply involved in the administration and program of the group-service agency. The socially isolated lives of some people have caused them to develop fears or prejudices about the unknown. They have stereotyped all Negroes from a few bad experiences, or their perceptions are limited by segregated patterns of living. The defenses of projection and denial may be deep in racial prejudice and are frequently reinforced by sanction of the social milieu. One of the major aspects of bringing about any value change will be an examination of the present condition, a confrontation with the obligation and responsibility for social change, and some help in developing sound methodology for change. Personal change supported by social change is needed simultaneously.

Values are a precious commodity for the individual and for society. Values come to an individual through his heritage, family, friends, social and occupational associates. Values are also social—the beliefs and customs of the group or subsociety. They are not easily modified. They cannot be changed merely by someone wishing it so. Karl Mannheim, in discussing the matter of value change, suggests that, “whereas the most important values governing a society based upon the rule of custom were blindly accepted, the creation of . . . new values and their acceptance are to a large extent based upon conscious and rational value appreciation.”<sup>1</sup> This is particularly true in the American scene today where the legislative action reflects the conscious and rational approach through use of the courts and the law, while the resistance to this

<sup>1</sup> Karl Mannheim, “Roots of the Crisis in Evaluation,” in Warren G. Bennis *et al.*, eds., *The Planning of Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 106.



change is frequently based on local customs, local practices, and violence.

Mannheim states further that as a society becomes more rational in solving its problems the evolution and development of change and values will become a more rational process. Therefore, people must be helped to see the need for value change, must create the new values, disseminate these values, help them gain acceptance and become accepted practice within the stream of thought and custom. these functions, Mannheim believes, fall to the educational and sanctioned forces of the schools, the church, and social work. Who has a clearer role in this function than group-service agencies, which have always seen an education and action focus within their range of services?

The changing roles of Negroes in all aspects of American life, of necessity, change the roles of white population. As barriers are eliminated in employment, education, voting, housing, and social activity, the net result is increased contact, association, and experience. The group service agency can facilitate these associations, prepare people for the contacts, and help to make the experiences more acceptable through providing opportunities for modification in personal attitudes and sentiments. These personal attitudes and sentiments must be "treated" as the social situation is changed.

Bettelheim and Janowitz state that in the matter of developing desegregation the elimination of barriers, social controls, and institutional arrangements must be considered.<sup>2</sup> But in the matter of integration, personal controls and individual attitudes must be the target. They further state,

the task of professionals in intergroup relations is to mobilize citizen leadership and citizen participation in order to strengthen both appropriate social and personal controls. . . . Social controls must operate to strengthen personal controls to produce attitudes and sentiments of mutual self-respect. . . . We are entering a period of organizational effort and community involvement which will penetrate the entire fabric of our urban society.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, *Social Change and Prejudice* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), Chap. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

The responsibility now falls to the agency to work on the personal controls, the values and beliefs that will facilitate or hinder true integration. The social group work method may well be used in individual attitude change through various group treatment approaches; but social group work practice, and structure, administration, and functioning of the group-service agency, through its many approaches to people, may provide a greater thrust in reinforcing on a wider scale the planned social value change.

There are certain ethical considerations in planned value change. It is a fundamental principle of social work practice that people who identify themselves with an agency committed by its stated purpose to work toward a broad and distant goal should be involved in determining the means by which the goal is to be approached. Although the process may be slow, go through many steps in deliberation and communication, the final product will be the result of collaboration and group thinking, and then may be assumed as a group responsibility. This type of deliberation is strenuous and time-consuming and frequently fraught with tension even to the point of conflict. The confrontation by a board and staff of their responsibility for policy development and program planning in this area may elicit an expression of opinion, fear, concern, or resistance which can be considered and worked with in the group and by the group, around the task to be done.

There seem to be five phases of the process which may take place in a group-service agency working toward value change with those participants who are of a socially isolated white population.

1. The first phase is the "initiation" or "assessment." This is the point at which someone in the agency becomes aware that this agency has responsibility in the ongoing struggle for interracial relations. Discussion is opened in board, committees, and staff as to the appropriate action. The abstract goal is made explicit in directing the agency toward a specific goal in race relations. Existing objectives and policies must be examined to assure that they are consistent with good interracial practices.

This period may be stimulated externally or internally. Externally, it may be by the national or local organization of which this unit is an affiliate, by a welfare planning body in the community,

by a militant civil rights group, or by other community institutions which have a concern, such as churches, schools, or other social welfare agencies. Internally, it may come from either board, staff, or program participants.

Collaboration comes into play early in this phase; for if a staff attempts to discuss the question of agency responsibility without board participation, they do not have the sanction for carrying out objectives. If the board alone addresses the question, then the staff and the volunteers are not prepared.

An agency may make a decision about a relationship to militant civil rights groups. They may wish to affiliate with, support financially, or remain unrelated to, such groups. The advantage of some relationship may be support to the agency as well as experience for agency leaders in the civil rights movement. On the other hand, the disadvantages may be the inappropriateness of militant action for agency purpose and function, and the possible lack of control within the militant action group which might commit the agency to methods or approaches to particular problems not compatible with its general purposes. These decisions must be faced.

Integration and its accompanying need for value change have been of concern to the Young Women's Christian Association for many years; however, in 1964, when racial tensions increased and new militant civil rights groups were emerging, the Cleveland YWCA directed its attention to ways in which further effort could be made in the area of intergroup relations.

A special committee of the board was established to reassess goals and determine the responsible role of the YWCA. All branches were involved in the deliberation, and the following recommendation was presented to, and accepted by, the Board of Directors:

That the YWCA, to meet the changing problems of the community, intensify and accelerate its program in Intergroup Relations through the reassignment of volunteer and staff responsibilities and the employment of additional staff.

Negative community reaction was feared by some board members; while some felt the need of sanction for planned value change, they did not want the YWCA to get "too far out" and

thereby threaten community support. Reassurance was given to these individuals by the reaffirmation of a statement on "Guides to Interracial Policy and Practice" by the Cleveland Welfare Federation and the Community Needs Report of the Group Services Council which recommended that agencies assume responsibility for increased effective intercultural and interracial experience among the members of the white and Negro communities.

Some individuals felt that because the YWCA did not affiliate with a new civil rights organization there was a denial of YWCA purpose and principles. Only time can fully dispel or justify those fears. Although the board action affected branches differentially, each was faced with a reexamination of its practices.

2. The second phase is the "tooling-up process" or "orientation." Through a collaborative process of board and staff a series of training sessions may be set up at this point. Such training courses should be offered to professional, clerical, and maintenance staff, board and committee members, volunteers, and perhaps some indigenous group leaders on the adult and adolescent levels. The course should include some sociological information on the nature of the current Negro revolution,<sup>4</sup> some study of the local community and the prevailing attitudes,<sup>5</sup> some discussion of the nature of prejudice,<sup>6</sup> and the effects of social isolation.<sup>7</sup> Case excerpts from practice may be used. There is no substitute for this type of orientation if the agency is to move with skill and direction.

Such a workshop was planned by the Cleveland YWCA. A qualification for employment by the YWCA is acceptance of a policy of open membership; however, there are varying degrees of commitment to the policy on the part of staff. It was a consensus of volun-

<sup>4</sup> Charles E. Silverman, *Crisis in Black and White* (New York: Random House, 1964); William Brink and Louis Harris, *The Negro Revolution in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964); Peter Rose, *They and We* (New York: Random House, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> See study outline, Herman D. Stein and Irving Sarnoff, "A Framework for Analyzing Social Work's Contribution to the Identification and Resolution of Social Problems," in *The Social Welfare Forum, 1964* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 51 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Bettelheim and Janowitz, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Robin Williams, Jr., *Strangers Next Door* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1964).

teer and staff leadership that more training in race relations should be made available to professional staff in order effectively to carry out the board's decision. It was decided to offer a workshop of twelve weekly sessions under the leadership of a consultant from the local school of social work.

A staff Steering Committee was appointed with representation from all branches, all ages, all levels of employment, as well as particular responsibilities—health, physical education and recreation, youth, adult, executive. While this would seem to be too large a committee, planned value change must be a collaborative effort if it is to be effective. The committee assumed responsibility for the direction and guidance of the consultant, helped to evaluate each session, and afforded a channel for staff reaction.

The focus of the workshop on planning and process provided a laboratory experience. Staff members participated in integrated program and observed specific techniques in handling problems which arose. The developing sensitivity to race relations produced a degree of uneasiness and self-consciousness which was in sharp contrast to that expressed in previous staff discussions.

In an attempt to test the validity and usability of the theory, staff members were asked to submit case material of situations related to race. The purpose was to focus staff attention on tasks and methods. Two of the situations analyzed, role-played, and discussed follow:

A telephone call came from the mother of a high school girl, who was concerned that her daughter wanted to ask a Negro Y-Teen Club member to spend the weekend in their home. To quote: "I am not prejudiced against these Negro girls, and I want Mary to know them and be nice to them . . . she's even had them in our home for club meetings. . . . Now, I believe her father and I are broadminded and understanding, but we feel this is going too far and feel the YWCA has no right to go against parents' wishes."

The discussion centered on the responsibility which the YWCA should assume for the involvement of parents in conference preparation; the need for staff sensitivity to situations, in this instance making clear the position of the YWCA, but not condoning or condemning a differing parental point of view; and the importance of providing support to both the daughter and her parents.



A distraught mother of three children came to the Y during the time of school picketing in protest to the "bussing in" of Negro children because of overcrowded schools in an adjacent area. She is a YWCA board member and active in the P.T.A. To guarantee the safety of her children each day she walked to school with them and, in doing so, crossed the picket line. Because of this she was ostracized by her friends and neighbors. Her children could not understand why she was called ugly names, and her husband asked: "Why must you be so vocal in your opinion? The men at work want to know what you are trying to prove."

It was the consensus that the role of the YWCA staff member was to relate this mother to others in the Y and the community who shared her point of view; suggestions were offered as to ways of involving her husband.

3. Phase three is "planning for deliberate action." The assessment in the previous phases turns up certain targets for change. It is recognized that the agency serves only a limited number of residents in any community. It may serve the highest or the lowest status people, or may reach the average residents but not the leadership. Agency action may influence only those who are involved in program, or it may fan out through the community leadership to many others. Board and staff need to be realistic in their assessment and planning about the anticipated effect. In planning, consideration should be given to those services which might most appropriately lend themselves to value change with predictable outcome.

There should be discussion in the planning stage as to employment and placement of staff who are Negro, with consideration of the most strategic position levels for such persons. Similarly, consideration should be given to the finding and election of Negroes who are competent to serve as board and committee members, and to absorbing them in the agency operation not as representatives of the race but as persons whose life experiences could help in the deliberation around value change, and whose presence would provide the first experience in interracial association for some board members.

Planning should also include exploration of ways by which agency participants may be brought into extended experiences



with, and exposure to, Negroes of the same general socioeconomic level and with common social interests.

In the Cleveland YWCA, staff from each branch were asked to consider value change in their immediate community and to determine the first target areas. In some branches more effort at further integration of boards and committees became the primary target; in others, beginning steps at integration needed to be taken; in racially isolated branches it meant involving individuals of a different race from outside the branch area as well as cooperative planning for interbranch activities.

4. Phase four is "action." The plans made in phase three will need to be put into operation.

At a meeting of the Cleveland YWCA board, some of the content of the staff workshop was presented. Several of the cases were role-played and discussed. For a few members this was the first confrontation with problems inherent in the policy as adopted. There was significant dialogue.

One branch is located in an area where a rapid movement of Negroes into a previously all-white, middle-class community is occurring. Highly competent staff and lay leaders have brought about the integration of the board, committees, all elementary school programs, and the majority of Y-Teen clubs. This has been done through a frank acknowledgment on the part of both Negro and white leaders that integration in this branch is a primary goal.

Nine of the fourteen branches now have racially integrated boards and committees. In several places this means that only one or two Negro or white women serve on the board. Careful planning has taken place in order that the experience be a positive one. The minority representatives, whether Negro or white, must be committed to integration in the YWCA. In some branches a Negro woman must be willing to be the first of her race on the board. Many white branch members are for the first time associating with Negro women whose education, culture, and economic status are comparable to their own.

Realizing that frequently clerical staff are called upon to answer questions relative to YWCA policies involving race, sessions were

planned for them to meet with the consultant. The program content centered on their handling of calls, questions, and remarks, as well as on their reactions to persons of other races who come into the Y.

Numerous interbranch activities provide interracial experiences—adult and teen-age leadership training, play days, swim teams, leadership exchange, joint Y-Teen club discussions and potlucks. Such programs are cooperatively planned by representatives of the branches and generally are not limited to one event, which, however successful, can be considered as only a beginning step in value change for the socially insulated.

YWCA members have taken leadership in organizing human relations councils in several suburbs. YWCA facilities are made available for meetings of these groups. Programs on fair housing have been sponsored in two branches located in all-white areas.

Y-Teen members participated in a leadership exchange program which provided opportunities for them to assist with program for younger girls in branches racially and culturally different from their own.

One branch area includes a small Negro community. Although the Y-Teen Club which meets in the high school has been integrated for a number of years, no Negro girls participated in activities at the branch. A Leaders Club was organized to assist with program for younger girls. It was hoped the club would be interracial, but no one anticipated that the initial membership would include six Negro and six white girls. Through the skillful leadership of staff and volunteers, the club program has led to the participation of Negro parents in branch activities. Again, with conscious effort, an integrated program became a reality.

Residence camping is one of the most productive settings for value change. To guarantee the experience of learning to know and appreciate girls of various social, cultural, economic, racial, and religious backgrounds, each of the fourteen branches is assigned a quota for each camp session. Staff selection and cabin assignments are made with the same objective in mind.

5. Phase five, "reassessment," should begin almost as soon as any part of phase four has begun. If the over-all goal of planned

value change is to be met there must be continual and careful assessment of the effects of action or reaction, positive or negative. Movement may be too fast or too slow, toward the wrong target or the right target. Program with young people may demand simultaneous program with their parents, as in the instance cited in the case material. Board and staff need to maintain open and active relationships with good channels for feedback in reassessment. A timetable for periodic review and program planning should be established.

We began with the premise that if integration is to take place, it is the responsibility of all segments of the population. The Civil Rights Law demands certain compliance with regulations, but it does not provide the education and emotional experience necessary to help people to change attitudes and beliefs which result from living in a segregated society. This latter function may well be assumed by group-service agencies.

Engagement in this process must be deliberate, carefully thought out and worked through, planned and executed with the greatest skill and patience, with goals formulated, and with a process of study, assessment, activity, evaluation, and reassessment. But the social condition will not wait for too much deliberation. Action must be immediate, for it is already late.

There can be no equivocation relative to the responsibility on the part of group-service agencies for planned value change. In Cleveland there is no longer an apology for delay. "The time is short, the hour is late, the matter is urgent. It is not incumbent upon us to complete the task, but neither are we free to desist from daring all we possibly can." <sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> From *The Ethics of the Fathers*, quoted in Silverman, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

# *New Ways of Serving Agricultural Migrants*

by *ETHEL W. JACOBS*

THE POSITION STATEMENT ON PUBLIC WELFARE adopted by the National Social Welfare Assembly on December 13, 1961, includes the statement that "the purposes of democracy are best served when social welfare programs function under both voluntary and governmental auspices."

An example of such a cooperative effort was initiated on May 1, 1964, between the New Jersey State Department of Health and the National Travelers Aid Association. As a demonstration project, it has been a unique experience for both agencies. The New Jersey State Department of Health has been one of the pioneers in bringing health services to migrants. Their program had produced evidence that the migrants as a group are faced with many and complex social problems which seriously influence the effectiveness of the medical and health services offered. It was also realized that in some cases early intervention concerning social problems might have prevented subsequent physical or mental deterioration or breakdown. Neither the Department nor the community had resources to meet the kinds of problems which were presented. What was needed was a combination of medical and family casework which could offer financial assistance during periods of crisis and would also have some machinery for follow-up and joint planning when the migrants left New Jersey to return home or go on to other places of work.

Travelers Aid has a long tradition of serving the mobile poor. The hallmark of its work is a constellation of casework-focused services which include financial assistance and the Travelers Aid

Chain of Service as integral components. Out of its long experience in working with mobile people, Travelers Aid has developed specific tools and techniques which have been demonstrated to be most effective in dealing with people who have roots in one or more communities, or who have no roots anywhere. Agricultural migrants have always been a part of the Travelers Aid caseload but had never been reached before actually in the labor camps and farms where they were working.

As the result of a series of meetings and consultations during which there was mutual exploration of each agency's function and method of operation, the New Jersey State Department of Health negotiated a contract with National Travelers Aid Association to provide casework services during the 1964 season.

Steinbeck wrote *Grapes of Wrath* some twenty-six years ago and shocked the nation with his story about the Joad family. Yet the Joads are still with us, and the conditions of their life have not altered to any great extent. In spite of the country's rising prosperity, agricultural migrants still constitute a serious "pocket of poverty," to use Galbraith's term. This dichotomy of the American economy is one which most Americans agree is inherent in our present-day society. Oscar Ornati says:

Thus, the problem of poverty, at the level of subsistence, appears to be separable from the problem of the well-being of the economy. Indeed, it is correct to assert at one and the same time that the American economy of the middle sixties is both an affluent economy and one in which many continue to be very poor.<sup>1</sup>

Wilbur J. Cohen, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, asserts:

It is interesting to note that the progress in reducing poverty since World War II has been effected without any major change in the percentage distribution of income by size of income. . . . Thus it is apparent that the reduction of poverty since World War II has been a result of a general rise in incomes rather than of a change in distribution of the total.<sup>2</sup>

According to a report of the Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of the United States Senate Committee on Labor and Public Wel-

<sup>1</sup> Oscar Ornati, "An Overview of Poverty," *American Child*, XLVI, No. 2 (1964), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Wilbur J. Cohen, "The Administration's Attack," *ibid.*, p. 5.



fare, the average migrant earned \$868 in 1963, and this included \$211 he earned from work outside farming. For the whole year, the migrant earned about as much as the average factory worker made in two months. And of course the migrant's pay did not include such fringe benefits as pensions, paid vacations, unemployment or health insurance. Even if we add the earnings of wife and children, the average income of the migratory family comes to only \$1,432 a year.

The problems experienced by the men, women, and children who work as agricultural migrants are severe, diverse, and difficult to solve. For example, the cases during our one year of demonstration encompassed the widest range of situations. They included death, attempted murder, total incapacitation from an accident, child neglect, desertion of the breadwinner, and both physical and mental illness. Add to these grave conditions the fact that the poverty problems of the migrants are compounded by prejudice and restrictive residence laws. In addition, many benefits of both public and private agencies and institutions are not available to them because of legislative exclusion or geographical factors. For this reason, financial assistance, along with professional social work oriented to the special problems of migratory workers, is required in order to give agricultural migrants the kind of "hand up" which was envisaged in the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act.

Under a purchase-of-service contract, the National Travelers Aid Association agreed to provide a mobile casework service to the agricultural migrants in three counties (Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem) in the southern part of New Jersey, chosen because they had few, if any, social agency resources. The purposes of the project were twofold:

1. We wanted to demonstrate the effectiveness of a reaching-out approach which would offer remedial as well as preventive and rehabilitative casework services to the migratory workers and their families who came to work in New Jersey and encountered social and welfare problems during the harvest season. The project was designed to make family-centered casework service available at, or preferably before, the point of crisis with the aim of stabilizing the individual or family in the new environment or in assisting them



to make other plans. In every situation, the best social plan must be chosen. Each decision must be based upon consideration of the alternatives of return to place of origin or relocation in a different community.

2. We would accumulate factual data and casework histories which would document the variety and extent of need evidenced by these people, and be utilized as the basis for making recommendations concerning and working toward the creation of resources to meet such demonstrated need. To implement this objective, the project provided for a written report of the experience which is to be given wide distribution on the local, state, and national levels to lay and professional groups and individuals. The creation of a citizens committee to act in an advisory and helping capacity was contemplated since it was also anticipated that a successful demonstration would increase public acceptance of the people involved and their problems as well as a growing sense of responsibility in helping to provide resources not currently available.

A trained and experienced caseworker was chosen with special concern for selecting a worker who could accept and relate well to people who are on the bottom rung of the social and economic ladder. One of the responsibilities of the worker (who also acted as director of the project) was the recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteers, including volunteers from the migrant group. He was also charged with the responsibility to work toward identifying and subsequently involving leaders from among the migrant groups.

Although there was an office in Woodstown, the worker used a station wagon in order to reach his clients and also to provide privacy for interviewing. The hours of service were designed to be flexible enough so that out-of-hours requests for help could be answered. The structure for service was built on the twin concepts of reachability and availability.

The financing of the project came from four sources. The New Jersey Department of Health contract paid for staff salary and expenses from Migrant Health Act funds. Use of office space, telephone, and some secretarial help was also supplied by the Department. The money for financial assistance was contributed by three

private philanthropic foundations. The mobile unit was a gift from the AFL-CIO to the National Travelers Aid Association, on loan for the project. Consultation, supervision, and the cooperation of the Chain of Service were the Association's contributions.

What has been learned and accomplished in this first project year has been significant, and we are extending the project for at least one additional year. Major areas of public social policy are involved. Many conflict-of-interest issues need to be resolved—some real, some fancied. We have learned definitely that certain things are true in working with agricultural migrants and we have taken them into consideration in planning for the second year of operation:

1. Their need for casework help is great, but casework with migrants poses somewhat different problems from working with the middle class. The cultural and economic deprivation of the client group, the adverse conditions under which they live, and the fact that they usually are referred for casework help during a crisis situation, must all be taken into consideration by the worker. The challenge is to train staff to understand the migrant and how to work with him in order to develop his capacity for self-direction. We must learn to give our services in such a way that they make sense to these particular clients. Concepts taught in school must be reexamined. We must interpret anew our stereotyped notions of what constitute appropriate client responses. We must develop new yardsticks to measure the client's "ability to use treatment," the degree of his "motivation," or the depth of his "insight."

In working with agricultural migrants, the caseworker must be acutely aware of the social environment in a new and dynamic way. When so much reality is present, the worker must diagnose with skill and understanding the extent to which these factors are used defensively, to obscure intrapsychic conflict. In other words, diagnostic skills need broadening and sharpening to include the environmental aspects which influence the client's psychodynamics.

A major characteristic of our work has been that migrants have been referred to us in acute stress situations, and we have recognized that external pressures will continue to be a more common

reason for referral to us than internalized conflicts. With continued interpretation to potential sources of referral, however, we hope to serve more people who are not in crisis situations, so that we can give a more preventive and rehabilitative service.

2. Environmental help of all kinds, including . . . adequate financial assistance, must be available as part of the helping process. Without it, the migrant cannot mobilize his inner resources toward problem-solving. This help has included such diverse services as helping with posthospital placement, finding new housing, and securing legal aid. One of our future objectives will be to encourage earlier referrals so that we can plan more effectively.

3. The mobile unit has been an indispensable tool in helping the migrants. Since very few can supply their own transportation, especially in times of trouble, there must be a way for the worker to go to them. The usual migrant housing does not offer much privacy or comfort for interviewing. In addition, the unit represents service to the migrants, and the Travelers Aid lamp painted on the car door has become a recognized and welcome symbol. The worker clocked 12,000 miles during the first six months of the project. Without this mobility, the service could not have been given. We will use the vehicle again this coming year, perhaps supplemented by volunteer transportation if we are able to work out and finance the necessary insurance coverage.

4. As we give individualized help to the migrant, he cannot be considered outside his migrancy status. In attempting to assist him to reach his goals, whether short- or long-range, there must be an evaluation of the alternatives open to him—whether he can support his family in his old community, should continue with his migrant pattern, or should relocate in order to make a better social and vocational adjustment. This kind of mobility-related, problem-solving casework is made possible through the Travelers Aid Chain of Service.

Geographically, the agricultural migrant works and lives in a rural area which has few if any social services even for residents, and this must be taken into consideration. Problems arise over the very fact that services are being created for the nonresident which are not available for the resident. For this reason we have shifted

our program emphasis somewhat. We now say that we serve three groups: the agricultural migrants, the farmers' interests, and the community in general.

Our interagency relationships have been extremely important. One of the real services we have performed has been to demonstrate what the job of a trained caseworker is and how he can help both the client and the community. As a direct result, one hospital administrator is making an effort to get a trained social worker on his staff for the first time.

5. People as deprived as migrants almost always are, find it hard to relate to a helping person. The worker must learn to speak their language and act in ways which are meaningful to them. They are often suspicious or even hostile to people whose role they do not understand. When they do accept help, they are all too often servile and do not see themselves as participating.

The past sources of help for most migrants have been family, friends, and church. Perhaps they have also known doctors, dentists, and nurses. They do not understand, until it is demonstrated to them, that help can also come from a social worker. The casework function is harder for them to understand unless it is related to an emergency which they recognize. We are so often working with people who have lost hope, or never had any, that this must be taken into consideration so that unrealistic goals will not be set. The caseworker must therefore expect to spend more than the usual amount of time in communicating with migrants and in establishing a relationship with them. This same necessity operates in trying to develop leadership and recruit volunteers from within the group.

The Puerto Rican presents an additional difference in that he expects to receive all his services from government. He does not understand the private agency function and is suspicious of any service for which he does not pay unless it comes from the government.

6. Migrants stay in New Jersey for relatively short periods of time. Even if they stay all summer, this is often not sufficient time for following up on planning. Next year there will be planned

personal follow-up by the worker in selected communities in the South. Other clients will be followed up by means of the Travelers Aid Chain of Service.

7. The migrant cannot utilize opportunities under the new training or retraining programs for which he is technically eligible unless he can receive both counseling and temporary financial help while he is being assisted in applying for them. Without adequate income-maintenance programs, the migrant is caught in the treadmill of his marginal existence and is immobilized by it. Therefore, next year we will continue to offer financial assistance whenever this is denied by the local community.

8. There are many tasks for the volunteer, and these we have begun to identify. Plans are being made to apply for two VISTA volunteers who will live with the migrants in New Jersey during the summer and who will continue to work with them in a selected community in Florida when they return home. This year, volunteers were used mostly to help with transportation. They took parents to the hospital to visit their children and took children to recreational and medical facilities. We expect a greatly expanded volunteer program next year to include a variety of services for which the subprofessional helper can be trained. Examples include hospital visits with patients, home visits with relatives, and contacts with potential sources of referral for education and interpretation. All volunteers will receive orientation, training, and supervision on a planned basis.

9. The workers who make up the East Coast migrant stream are largely members of minority groups, predominantly Puerto Ricans and Southern Negroes. Some are Spanish-speaking, and we plan to have Spanish-speaking volunteers help with the problems of communication which are pervasive and relate to hospitals, doctors, nurses, police. Because they are culturally different and some have skins of a different color, they are not always accepted by the communities in which they live. There is often discrimination and prejudice, and fear, too, that they will leave the migrant stream and become neighbors as well as welfare charges. Much needs to be done to change community attitudes, and the program next



year will stress the involvement of key leaders in the community along with the migrant leadership to work on this problem through education and interpretation.

Partly because of discrimination, but also because of their ignorance, migrants need free legal advice and representation. They have problems with the police because of various infringements of laws covering the use of automobiles. In automobile accidents they get into difficulty both when they are the drivers and when they are the victims. Most of our legal problems involved automobiles in one way or another. We have had the active cooperation of the Salem County Bar Association for free legal advice this year. We hope in the year ahead to be able to extend this much-needed service to migrants in the other counties we cover.

10. An advisory committee which includes representation from the group served has been set up. It is a committee which is also widely representative of community interests. Its ultimate purpose will be to take responsibility for the establishment of a voluntary agency which will provide casework and related services to all people in the area who need help "with problems causing them to move or resulting from their moving, whether for social, economic or psychological reasons."<sup>3</sup> The committee will also assume responsibility for "working toward the improvement of the particular conditions which tend especially to affect the group they are serving."<sup>4</sup> Thus, community support will be established for an ongoing program, with the committee probably incorporated as a board of directors with legal and moral responsibility for policy-making, financing, and social action. Immediate future responsibility will include exploring the possibility of extending Travelers Aid service to transients, newcomers, and other migrants through participation in local community action programs under the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA).

Even the provisions of the Social Security Act have done little for this particular "pocket of poverty." Old-Age and Survivors' Insurance was not available to agricultural migrants until the Janu-

<sup>3</sup> *Current Emphases in Travelers Aid Function and Operation* (New York: National Travelers Aid Association, 1960).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



ary, 1955, legislation, but then was limited by certain conditions which were further restricted under the amendments of January 1, 1957. The situation is further complicated by the fact that abuses of the law are not uncommon and may not be eliminated, even under the new Crew Leader Registration law (Public Law 88-5827) which became effective on January 1, 1965, although that is a constructive first legislative step. Public welfare assistance under the Social Security Act is still practically nonexistent for agricultural migrants. In most cases they do not meet the eligibility requirements for the categorical programs. When thrown on the mercy of local communities for general assistance, they are faced with restrictive and often punitive policies. It is evident that the Social Security Act, designed to assume "collective responsibility for the inadequacies of a badly functioning economic system,"<sup>5</sup> has not fulfilled this responsibility with respect to all groups of people. A list of all the protections that agricultural migrants do not have would be overwhelming. It is more constructive here to enumerate what is newly available in the form of legislation which will enable us to bring agricultural migrants into the stream of the "visible" and "remembered" instead of the "invisible" and the "forgotten"—terms which, by now, conjure up attitudes of hopelessness and frustration.

We have for the first time a fairly wide array of social legislation—public policy with appropriations—designed to assist agricultural migrants. Religious and labor groups have been most articulate in supporting such legislation. Special group, such as the National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor and the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor, have also made an important contribution by educating the public and mobilizing community support. Social work has been conspicuous by its absence, except, perhaps, in its efforts to remove welfare residence requirements for all people. In Congress, we have had a few rare voices. Senator Harrison A. Williams, of New Jersey, has led the fight for more and better laws to help the farm labor situation in the United States. The

<sup>5</sup> Harry L. Lurie, "The Drift to Public Relief," in *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1931* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 214.

88th Congress can list among its accomplishments the termination of Public Law 78<sup>6</sup> and the enactment of housing, crew leader registration, and other ameliorative measures.

Title IIIb of the EOA provides for housing, sanitary facilities, educational and day-care projects for seasonal farm workers and their families. Nevertheless, there is still much unfinished legislative business for the 89th Congress and those which follow.

Among several pieces of legislation passed prior to the enactment of the EOA, the Migrant Health Act (Public Law 87-692) of 1962 has been an effective instrument for bringing health services to the migrants.

The fact that for the first time we seem to be taking legislative steps to bring the agricultural migrant into the mainstream of American life does not by any means constitute more than a mere beginning in view of the severity of the problem. However, it may mean that public indifference is turning to concern and that the conscience of America is at last being aroused. It seems certain that the Administration's focus on the elimination of poverty will spearhead removal of discrimination against the agricultural migrant as well as all farm workers. Both Federal and state legislation is still needed in most areas which affect farm workers. These include such benefits as the right to public welfare without regard to residence requirements, workmen's compensation, disability insurance, minimum wages, unemployment compensation, Old-Age and Survivors' Insurance, absentee voting, collective bargaining, and the regulation of labor camps. We need better laws in regard to the transportation aspects of the migrant's life, better laws to regulate crew leaders and labor contractors. And lastly, and most essential, we need better legislation relative to child labor and education for the children in migrant life. Even this formidable list is not exhaustive—exhausting though it may be to consider what still lies ahead to be achieved. We must bring the war on poverty to bear upon the plight of those citizens who follow the sun to harvest our crops. The task will not be simple. As Wilbur Cohen points out: "Imaginative new approaches are called for to bring

<sup>6</sup> Public Law 78 terminated the Mexican (Bracero) contract worker importation program on December 31, 1964.

needed health, education, and welfare services to low-income families to help them overcome the effects of poverty and deprivation.”<sup>7</sup> The problems besetting the agricultural migrant demand our very best efforts. In his Yorktown oration in 1881, Robert Charles Winthrop expressed it well when he said: “The poor must be wisely visited and liberally cared for, so that mendicity shall not be tempted into mendacity, nor want exasperated into crime.”

<sup>7</sup> Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

# *Social Services for the Mobile Poor in Urban Areas*

by SAVILLA MILLIS SIMONS

MOBILE AMERICANS WHO ARE POOR are often refugees in their own country—refugees from unemployment, poverty, discrimination. As newcomers and outsiders they are people without a foothold in the community. Lacking visibility, they are, for the most part, overlooked and disregarded by organized welfare. Their greatest tragedy is that they are unwelcome and unneeded.

The “mobile poor” may be defined as those who have moved across county or state lines<sup>1</sup> and thus, in contrast to the “resident poor,” are new to the community. They may have come with the intention of settling there; or found themselves there almost accidentally, while in search of work or in flight from intolerable situations elsewhere. They have in common the fact that they are rootless and strangers in an unfamiliar place.

Their plight is more tragic than that of the early immigrants who came at a time when their labor and skills were essential to the development of a great new country. Life was hard for them in the worst of the city slums, and they were frequently disliked and discriminated against. But they were needed. They had a place in the economy, and there was opportunity for their children. International institutes, settlement houses, and other social services were largely focused on their needs.

In contrast, our present-day native-born refugees are surplus and, as a result of automation, are not wanted anywhere. Each community hopes that they will not stay and does what it can to

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Bureau of the Census uses the term “migrants” to describe those who have moved out of the country, but the term has varying connotations in popular usage. This group excludes intracounty movers.

move them on, or back where they came from. Legal barriers are raised; residence requirements for public assistance and services are established.

These people are part of the urban explosion, the result of the tremendous, historic, and continuing migration to urban areas from small towns and rural areas. During the last forty years 27,000,000 men, women, and children—native Americans—have poured into our great cities. Bagdikian points out that this is a larger number than the 24,000,000 immigrants who came here between 1880 and 1920<sup>2</sup> and contributed so much to the building of this country.

At present about two thirds of the population of the United States live in or near large cities. The movement to urban areas will continue. By 1980 three fourths of the population are expected to be living in metropolitan areas.

In general, migration takes place to locations where there is better economic opportunity. The greatest population movement has occurred from the plains states, the South, and the Northeast to the West, particularly California, which gained through migration almost two million persons between 1960 and 1963, and also to the Southwest and Florida.<sup>3</sup>

Negro workers are less mobile than white, but they continue to be pushed out of the South by limited opportunities and low earnings.

The poorest, most impoverished, most disadvantaged, those least able to cope with the complexities of urban society, move into the central city, usually to an area of deteriorated housing and high transiency, and disappear into the slums, unwanted and usually unaided. In contrast to "newcomers," these uprooted people may be called "potential or unsettled newcomers." They hope to establish themselves in the community but they have no assurance of realizing their hopes. Frustrated and disillusioned, they may have to return to the place from which they came, or move on in the desperate hope that things will be better elsewhere. A symbol of

<sup>2</sup> Ben H. Bagdikian, *In the Midst of Plenty: the Poor in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, "A Report on Manpower Requirements, Resources, Utilization and Training," March, 1965, p. 150.

the community's rejection of these in-migrants is that they are considered to be transients, if considered at all.

They come by train, by bus, and in old cars to a completely strange new life: young people traveling alone; farm youth coming to the city for the first time; runaways. Pregnant unmarried girls usually come by bus; many hitchhike, although hitchhiking is steadily declining. The automobile is increasingly the means of transportation for families moving as a unit, especially for those of low income. Many families who are not sufficiently well organized to buy tickets for a specific destination and get themselves and their possessions on a public carrier that leaves at a scheduled time may pile into the family jalopy and start off with only a vague plan.

In general, the in-migrants who come to the central city are poor, with little education and few skills. Sometimes they are illiterate, deprived culturally and socially. Frequently they are forced to move by poverty, unemployment, or displacement by automation. A high rate of mobility is found among families whose annual income is \$3,000 or less.<sup>4</sup> The rate of migration between March, 1962, and March, 1963, was about twice as high among unemployed as among employed workers.<sup>5</sup>

Many newcomers to the inner city are Negro or Spanish-speaking. Most, regardless of color, come from smaller places or rural areas where life is relatively simpler and the culture different. As a consequence, they are tragically unprepared for life and employment in a big city.

Because of different cultural patterns they sometimes do not conform to commonly accepted standards and customs. Conscious that they are unwelcome, they are suspicious, fearful, and baffled by the impersonal, highly organized, and complex requirements of city life, such as the forms they must fill out, and the difficulties of transportation, especially for those who cannot read or comprehend signs or directions.

The Chicago Travelers Aid Society in the fall of 1956 made a

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Current Population Reports: Population Characteristics," Series No. 15, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, *op. cit.*, p. 147.



two-week head-count study of newcomers arriving at downtown rail terminals and found over 1,700 such persons. Two thirds were Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, and Negroes. They are obviously confused and fearful. They were afraid to get on the escalator. They did not know how to use the dial telephone. They were distrustful of all station personnel and taxi drivers, refusing to allow anyone to help them with their luggage, which often included mattresses and other household equipment. It was almost impossible to understand their speech.

Many move primarily to escape from intolerable situations, trying to solve their problems by running away. This includes deserting husbands, or wives, runaway adolescents, and unmarried mothers who seek to avoid humiliation at home. Also among these are multiproblem or "multideprived" families, to use a term suggested by the Mobilization for Youth,<sup>6</sup> for whom life is just too much and who deal with their problems by moving to a new place, with very little understanding of what they will find there. Many are encumbered with crippling emotional problems and personal inadequacies of various kinds.

The impoverished in-migrants in our cities are subjected to all the slum conditions and problems of urban life from which the resident poor suffer. They find only extremely crowded, substandard, unsanitary, vermin-ridden housing with a total absence of privacy; lack of space for play, makeshifts of all kinds; indignities and exploitation by landlords, officials, salesmen, dope peddlers, and others who prey upon the poor. But all these problems are greatly exaggerated and aggravated for the new arrival because of strangeness, his unfamiliarity with urban life, his tragic lack of preparation for the conditions he now faces, and the unfriendliness and sometimes outright rejection by local residents.

Consequently, the mobile poor especially need help and intensive services of various kinds upon their arrival. Paradoxically, very little aid of a constructive nature is available to them. In most communities in-migrants are not entitled to public assistance and other public services except for very limited emergency help

<sup>6</sup> Mobilization for Youth, Inc., "Action on the Lower East Side; Progress Report July, 1962—June, 1964," p. 98.

or return to place of legal residence, if they still have one. Moreover, since passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, voluntary agencies usually give only limited emergency assistance. (Travelers Aid, however, is specifically designed to give intercity casework service, as well as financial assistance and practical aid with immediate problems.)

All too frequently, these strangers are treated as transients and limited to one or two nights' shelter and a few meals, even though they may be hoping to remain in the community. In a study made in 1960 by the National Study Service in the Tri-County area of Albany, Schenectady, and Troy, New York, it was found that one third of the people who requested aid had no home and one third had no destination.<sup>7</sup> The crucial need is for skilled counseling and other services to help the migrant make a realistic decision as to whether to stay, to go on, or to return to the community from which he came and then to help him carry out his plan. The lack of such services increases rootlessness, alienation, frustration, dependency, and antisocial behavior, which may be extremely costly to the community in the long run.

We face, then, tremendously complex and difficult problems in relocating and integrating the mobile poor and in giving constructive and meaningful services to them instead of, all too often, aggravating their problems and adding to the national problem of uprootedness by pushing them on to another community, thus encouraging aimless wandering.

First, we must recognize that the well-being of our communities and of the nation, as well as that of the men, women, and children involved, demands that we acknowledge the migrant poor as members of society and of our community. Our objective must be the successful relocation and integration of these people into a community where they can put down roots.

This involves the twofold approach which David R. Hunter has called macro- and micro-intervention—"policies and measures at the national, and even international, level designed for generalized effect throughout the social and economic organism" and "action focused on local, confined targets, the neighborhood . . .

<sup>7</sup> National Study Service, "Planning for Moving and Nonsettled People in a Tri-County Area," 1962.

and the individual." <sup>8</sup> For example, the success of intensive local services such as counseling, training, or retraining is dependent on the availability of jobs which, in turn, depend on a variety of economic measures.

Fundamental changes involving public policy should be made:

1. *Removal of discriminatory practices against nonresidents and outsiders*

Whether the poor come into the community as transients or to settle they must be helped if there is need:

Federal and state legislation must be passed in order to remove residence requirements and other arbitrary eligibility requirements for public assistance, public welfare services, and medical care so that those in need may be legally entitled to aid wherever they are.

The 1962 Public Welfare Amendments heralded a new day by bringing far-reaching, constructive changes that should result in a continuing strengthening of our entire public welfare system. However, the mobile poor did not benefit from these epoch-making changes, for the Administration's proposals for reduction in residence requirements were dropped.

Since then some new legislative proposals for extension of services have not required residence. For example, H.R. 6675, the Social Security Amendments of 1964, the new health bill now before the Congress, do not require residence for medical assistance. Even if they are deprived of food and shelter, nonresidents may be able to get medical care.

This is encouraging, but the fact remains that only two states, Connecticut and Hawaii, have no residence requirements. New York State had never had a residence requirement for assistance until the adoption in 1961 of the Anti-Abuse Law which forbids aid to those who have been in the state less than six months unless they show that they did not come into the state to get assistance. But now the New York State Citizens Committee on Welfare Costs has proposed a year's residence requirement.

There must be more liberal interpretation and administration

<sup>8</sup> David R. Hunter, "Toward the Abolition of Poverty: Micro- and Macro-Intervention," School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, November, 1964.

by local welfare departments of present legal provisions. For example, Edward V. Sparer, Director, Legal Services Unit, Mobilization for Youth, has successfully won reversal of refusals to grant aid under the Anti-Abuse Law in at least forty cases. He has stated his belief "that of the 2,730 cases denied in the first 10 months of the welfare abuse law's existence, 2,700 could have been reversed on appeal to the State board of social welfare—or courts—if the claimants had the vigorous advocacy of a lawyer."<sup>9</sup>

2. *The assumption of responsibility by local voluntary agencies for assistance to nonresidents and unsettled people in the community*

Pending the removal of residence requirements in public welfare, more assistance must be made available from voluntary sources as an integral part of a casework service. We must fill the gap in our welfare provisions which permits the poor who move across state boundaries to be left without the essentials of life and the skilled counseling they need so urgently to help them solve their problems.

3. *Provision by the Office of Economic Opportunity of financial assistance as an essential expense of relocation and the settling of mobile people*

If this is not done the antipoverty program, ironically, will continue to accentuate the gap in basic welfare provisions and the outrageous distinctions made among the poor themselves.

The community action programs under the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) contemplate: (1) developing and carrying out special educational and other programs for migrant or transient families; and (2) providing services to enable families from rural areas to meet problems of urban living. These programs, however, have not fully faced the reality that many such families arrive in the city after exhausting their meager funds. Moreover, the usual resources for aid for subsistence needs are not open to them except for emergency assistance. This is not enough to enable deprived people to take advantage of the opportunities opened through the program and to escape poverty.

<sup>9</sup> Edward V. Sparer, "The New Public Law: the Relation of Indigents to State Administration," in *The Extension of Legal Services to the Poor* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1964), p. 34.

In some instances, salaries for caseworkers to give intensive service to new arrivals have been provided although resources to meet subsistence needs are not available from any source. It would seem not only tragic but somewhat absurd if this gap in responsibilities between the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the OEO were not plugged.

#### 4. *The prevention of misdirected mobility*

Prevention of poverty in the urban slums should begin in the areas of outmigration. The Federal Area Redevelopment program, the Appalachian program, and the efforts of the President's Task Force on Community Assistance to aid potentially depressed areas are extremely important in preventing undesirable migration to the cities.

New and creative programs to provide premigration counseling are urgently needed to help potential migrants to decide more realistically on the feasibility of moving and the most desirable place to move to, and to make their plans with more understanding of the conditions in a large city. Too many poor migrants move to the cities with little knowledge of what they will face on arrival. Often they move on a sudden impulse in an effort to get away from the poverty and troubles they face in the home community only to find their problems compounded in the new location.

The U.S. Department of Labor in its 1965 report on manpower to the Congress states that, in general,

men leaving depressed areas have usually fared better than those remaining there [but that] some workers are worse off after migrating. . . . A considerable number, including many Negroes, mistakenly go to areas where there is little chance of employment, particularly for the unskilled. . . . Unskilled workers who migrate are subject to recurring unemployment and tend to make repeated moves. Many return home to resume the hunt for employment.<sup>10</sup>

The Department recommends:

1. Provisions of more and better information on employment opportunities throughout the country
2. Financial and other aids to migration for workers who would improve their job situation by moving but cannot do so for lack of funds

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, *op. cit.*, p. 146.



3. More help in finding jobs in the communities to which they move.

The cooperation of the Labor Department and the Travelers Aid in Puerto Rico in assuring premigration counseling services to prospective migrants to the mainland has demonstrated its value in improving the preparation of migrants and in preventing misdirected mobility. It is hoped that such cooperative programs can be extended in other areas, especially in the rural South.

5. *Provision of more outreaching services in the city*

In the urban areas, all too often, policy and practice are geared to the assumption that the potential newcomer is a transient to be helped on his way out of town. Actually, this is frequently not so. The in-migrant usually is looking for a job and a place to stay, unless his life pattern has already become one of continuous wandering from place to place.

All agencies involved in serving the in-migrant should adopt as their goal helping him to settle in whichever community seems best. In some instances this involves return to his former home where he has connections. Sometimes, after full exploration of the situation, it may mean helping him to move to another community with greater opportunity for employment. More often it means giving intensive help to him in settling in the community to which he has come.

Reaching the unsettled person in a large city at the time of arrival or soon after, early enough to give preventive service, presents many difficulties. A variety of methods must be used. Service in key transportation terminals, such as bus stations, is highly useful but must be supplemented. Extremely important is coordinated planning for referrals to Travelers Aid by other social agencies, shelters, and also nonsocial welfare groups, especially the police, churches, and service stations on the highways. There is evidence that the largest number of moving people who need help go to service stations and churches and that only a small percentage reach social agencies.<sup>11</sup>

This situation has developed rapidly in recent years as a result

<sup>11</sup> The National Study Service found that only one fourth of 2,300 requests made in the study month came to social agencies, including shelters.



of the increasing use of the automobile for travel and the new highways which frequently bypass population centers. Many auto travelers stop on the fringes of the city. In the large metropolitan areas further decentralization of agencies is necessary in order to make service accessible to these people and to facilitate referrals by service stations, churches, police, and other sources located on the highways and on the periphery of the city. There is, too, an urgent need to experiment with outposts located at strategic points and with the use of a mobile service in conjunction with them.

Poor newcomers to urban centers frequently drift to cheap, sub-standard housing in a slum area in the core of the city, sometimes called the "port of entry." National Travelers Aid Association has proposed that welcoming service centers be set up in these areas to reach new arrivals with immediate and intensive services and aid in establishing themselves in the community.

Such centers should be highly visible, preferably in store fronts, easily accessible, open seven days a week and for long hours, with bilingual workers if Spanish-speaking newcomers are involved. Special efforts must be made to overcome psychological and cultural barriers. The centers should be staffed with volunteers and aides from the neighborhood or ethnic group as well as professional workers. Such workers can help to allay suspicion and build confidence in the agency's concern and capacity to help. Such centers are now being established in several places as part of the community action programs under the OEO.

The giving of effective help to the mobile poor is a tremendous challenge. Great professional skill is required to prevent sudden flight and to help the client take constructive steps. There has been little research on the characteristics and needs of the most mobile part of the population and insufficient experimentation with methods of service.

The welcoming service centers and special services for the newly arrived among the poor in urban areas should be experimental in structure and program with a careful plan built into the project for assessment of results. Great flexibility and creative imagination are demanded. Throughout there must be a concerted and unremitting effort to get away from middle-class approaches.

The center must not only locate and reach newly arriving families and individuals but must extend an active and positive welcome. This requires, as a first step, drawing local residents into planning and participating in the actual welcoming and service process. Welcoming or host committees might be set up under neighborhood sponsorship with assignment of each newcomer family to a resident family in a "big-brother" or "adopt-a-family" relationship to help them become acquainted with the community.

An effort should be made through the involvement of local leadership to develop greater acceptance by the community of the outsider and stranger and more constructive attitudes toward him.

As in all Travelers Aid service, immediate assistance with major concrete problems of housing, employment, shopping, and so forth, is given. At the same time, the objective is to help the family determine whether they want to stay, or move to a place of greater opportunity, and then help them to carry out the decision. This often requires intercity casework service with several communities through the Travelers Aid Chain of Service. Every effort should be made to help the family settle into the chosen community, taking advantage of all available opportunities through employment, training, education, health, legal, adult education, and group work services and programs. Group counseling as well as individual counseling should be used, especially in relation to many initial problems of orientation to community resources and practices, legal requirements and rights.

The OEO attaches crucial importance to the provision of legal services to "guarantee the poor the right to secure their rights." The mobile poor not only have a variety of legal problems common to all citizens but, in addition, have many that are special to the poor and special to the nonresident. Charles Ares, of the New York University Law School, points out that the substantive law is biased against the poor. For example, the laws governing landlord and tenant protect the landlord, and the law of negligence protects those with wealth. These problems are particularly severe for the stranger and new resident, as has been demonstrated by the expe-

rience of Mobilization for Youth in appealing cases of entitlement to public assistance.

A focus of programs for the most deprived in our society on the interaction of the individual and social conditions and institutions, leads inevitably to stress on social action as a major element of the program. For example, HARYOU states: "This program . . . must be geared to developing in the victims of the ghetto the ability and the power to bring about denied social change through intelligent, systematic and responsible social action."

For far too long we have depended too much on a single approach to complex problems stemming from many causes, internal and external, and calling for a multifaceted but concerted approach.<sup>12</sup> Only a broadened goal with emphasis on correction of social and economic conditions contributing to growing problems of rootlessness as well as skillful and practical help to individuals and families can be effective in bringing the mobile poor from the fringes of American society into full participation as American citizens.

In 1964, I said:

We [social workers] must become multipurpose in that we must think and act in terms of social policy and social action as well as social treatment. We must attack the basic problems of community attitudes. Every practitioner, every agency, needs to learn how to bring the facts of individual suffering, of community deterioration to the attention of opinion-makers and the general public. To get a hearing we may have to resort to dramatic, unorthodox methods. In any case, it will take courage. But the time is ripe, the climate propitious . . .<sup>13</sup>

Today this is even more true.

<sup>12</sup> Mobilization for Youth, Inc., states: "Mobilization as a whole demonstrates movement away from a narrow methodological focus to a broad and integrated attack upon social problems . . . the role of the social worker as a 'generalist' calling upon the use of several methods."

<sup>13</sup> Savilla M. Simons, "Social Change Implications for Policy and Practice *re* Deterioration of the Inner City: a First Step toward Defining a Small Area Approach," National Conference on Social Welfare, Los Angeles, 1964.

# *New Approaches to Mental Health Treatment for Low-Income People*<sup>1</sup>

by FRANK RIESSMAN

THE NEW COMMUNITY-BASED mental health plans, arising from the late President Kennedy's Mental Health-Retardation Centers Act, promise a tremendous breakthrough in the treatment of blue-collar and low-income people.<sup>2</sup> Under the law, Federal matching grants will be made available to the states for the construction of community mental health centers. The major challenge now is what to put into these buildings; in other words, what adaptations and modifications of traditional treatment are needed in order to put life into the new structures?

Miller and Swanson state the need succinctly:

. . . the increasing number of blue-collar workers who are seeking help for their personal problems has made it obvious that traditional goals and methods must be modified. In clinics which serve patients in both social classes, a disproportionate number of blue-collar workers drop out of therapy very early because of dissatisfaction with the therapeutic procedure. It is important that psychotherapists learn more about the characteristics of manual laborers and about conditions under which these people mature. . . .

Our results indicate the desirability of exploring a variety of new psychotherapeutic techniques, particularly those in which words and concepts are subordinated to nonverbal and even motoric activities.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Portions of the present article appeared in a monograph published by the National Institute of Labor Education Mental Health Project in 1964, and will appear in the *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* (London, England).

<sup>2</sup> "Low-income" is used as an all-inclusive term to refer to blue-collar workers and "disadvantaged," "deprived," and "underprivileged" lower socioeconomic groups.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel R. Miller and Guy E. Swanson, *Inner Conflict and Defense* (New York: Henry Holt, 1960), pp. 397-98.

Numerous studies confirm these observations. They indicate that community mental health organizations have, by and large, failed to provide effective services to working people and low-income groups. Low-income individuals suffering from mental illness have either wound up in city- or state-supported mental institutions where, in President Kennedy's words, they have been "out of sight and often forgotten," or they have remained in the community without help until their behavioral deviations were such as to bring them to the "emergency attention" of corrective agencies.

A primary reason for the failure of community mental health programs to reach these large sections of the population has been their reluctance to modify the traditional forms of psychotherapy, which have constituted their principal treatment tool. The present-day institutional features of psychotherapy are primarily congenial to middle-class life styles. Thus middle-class patients are preferred by most treatment agents;<sup>4</sup> they are considered to be more treatable; psychotherapy is more frequently recommended as the treatment of choice;<sup>5</sup> and diagnoses are more hopeful (with symptomatology held constant).<sup>6</sup> Conversely, treatment as presently organized is not congenial to low-income clients, is not congruent with their traditions and expectations, and is poorly understood by them. In essence, these clients are alienated from treatment.

We suggest that this situation calls for a twofold strategy: modification of the traditional treatment approaches to accommodate the low-income client; and education and preparation of the low-income client for the necessary aspects of treatment not suited to his expectations.

With the aim of encouraging further experimentation, we have surveyed a wide spectrum of treatment techniques appropriate to low-income clients in different types of settings rather than pre-

<sup>4</sup> August B. Hollingshead and Fredrick S. Redlich, M.D., *Social Class and Mental Illness* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958).

<sup>5</sup> Norman Q. Brill and Hugh Storrow, "Social Class and Psychiatric Treatment," *Archives of General Psychiatry*, III (1963), 340-44.

<sup>6</sup> William Haase, "Rorschach Diagnosis, Socioeconomic Class, and Examiner Bias," unpublished dissertation, New York University, 1956.



senting one or two in detail and with fully developed rationale. This has been done, to some extent, in other papers by the author.<sup>7</sup>

*New approaches to intake and diagnosis.*—There is increasing evidence that most of the clinician's diagnostic tools, whether in the cognitive sphere (intelligence tests) or in the emotional sphere, are class-linked and class-biased. Haase<sup>8</sup> found that Rorschach records were interpreted quite differently depending upon the designated social class origin of the patient. The protocols of individuals reported as "lower-class" were diagnosed as more maladjusted with poorer prognosis than were their middle-class counterparts whose essentially similar records were used as controls. It is also interesting to note that the lower-class records were more frequently categorized in terms of psychosis and character disorder while the virtually identical records of middle-class clients were diagnosed as neurotic and normal.

Haase does not object to a class differential analysis *per se*, but rather to the fact that the analysis unwittingly but consistently concludes that the lower class is more maladjusted. Considering the lack of opportunity and difficult life conditions of the worker, a lower-class record which is identical with that of a middle-class person might be presumed to indicate greater health and better prognosis.

Apart from biases in interpretation, traditional diagnostic techniques which rely heavily on testing and interview procedures are not well suited to the low-income style, which is far more oriented to physical forms of expression. For this reason we strongly urge the use of role playing and situational tests as diagnostic tools and the employment of more game-like devices in general.

The following are some general recommendations regarding intake and diagnosis:

1. Telescope the initial interview and intake (shorten; cut red tape).<sup>9</sup> Use group intake procedures. Start the therapeutic process

<sup>7</sup> See Frank Riessman, "Role-Playing and the Poor"; "The 'Helper' Therapy Principle"; and "The Revolution in Social Work: the New Nonprofessional."

<sup>8</sup> Haase, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> See Rachel A. Levine, "A Short Story on the Long Waiting List," *Social Work*, VIII, No. 1 (1963), 20-22, for suggestions as to how to shorten intake procedures.



at once. Permit fuller catharsis while gathering case history; be very open and flexible.

2. Utilize pictorial interview and diagnostic techniques.<sup>10</sup> Consider hypnosis, role playing, and dreams as diagnostic devices. Use home interviews where possible; have problem-centered discussions.

3. Do not diagnose with middle-class standards and categories; do not presume inner conflict, acting out, lack of values, lack of guilt, or lack of verbal facility.

4. Attempt to determine the style of the individual—work style, cognitive style, interpersonal style; learn to understand his individual language; note the idiom. Note the client's humor, leisure pattern, interests, friendship pattern, extent of family relationships, identification models, defense mechanisms, role functioning.

5. Clarify the processes and goals of therapy; determine the life possibilities and specific direction of the particular patient.

*Development of rapport.*—During the first series of interview, every effort should be made to overcome the role distance and impersonality which contribute to the low-income client's alienation from the treatment agent. As steps in this direction, we suggest less stress on obtaining and recording objective information about the client's problem, background, and situation, and less emphasis on defining the agency's role, functions, and mode of operation.

Instead of these emphases, the therapist might want to:

1. Encourage the client to talk about his problems and feelings subjectively, to express himself without regard to dates, places, details and the like. Much useful information might be obtained in this way, but this would not be the emphasis or the goal.

2. Talk about himself where relevant and possible: "I had a problem like that once." "I come from a neighborhood (family) like yours." "I have trouble making both ends meet." "A friend of mine has a situation a lot like yours."

3. Record at the *end* of the meeting whatever minimum specific information is needed. The therapist or caseworker could indicate that this recording of information was as unpleasant to him as to

<sup>10</sup> Cartoon-like tests, such as the Rosenzweig frustration test, and simple picture selection instruments, such as the Szondi, may be especially valuable.

the client. He could share the low-income client's alienation toward impersonal bureaucratic procedure by saying that "we have to do this—let's get it over with as easily as we can" (so that we can go back to really coming to grips with your problems).

4. Provide whatever advice, service, or anticipation of improvement can be given at this stage.

In other words, "stage one," beginning with the initial interview and proceeding through the first four or five meetings, could be cathartic, supportive, informal, and should provide immediate service and appropriate advice. The assumption here is that low-income clients can accept directive authority when it is combined with informal friendliness.

In addition to these modifications, another very different initial approach might be explored. Role playing<sup>11</sup> can be introduced at the very beginning, not on a group basis at first, but simply on a one-to-one basis where the therapist and the client act out relevant situations (parent-child problems, marital difficulties, vocational guidance problems of an interpersonal nature, and so forth). Role playing of this kind is especially useful with young males, who are not receptive to "just talk," and in family counseling, and furnishes an excellent transition to group sessions. Role-playing sessions can be used diagnostically, while at the same time providing catharsis, support, problem objectification, problem-sharing, and group solution.

*Role-playing techniques.*—Role-playing techniques have long been popular in educational programs with blue-collar workers in labor unions and industry. Experience at Mobilization for Youth and various community organizations further indicates an exceptionally positive response to role playing by low-income people. While more systematic research is needed to validate these obser-

<sup>11</sup> Role playing is the flexible acting out (doing) of various types of problems in a permissive group atmosphere, such as a caseworker interviewing a withdrawn client or a person being interviewed by a housing project manager in a low-income housing project. As few as two people can role play, such as therapist and client; but most role playing is usually done in groups where two people act out a situation and the group discusses it. Since it is free of the tensions of an actual problem situation, role playing stimulates the trying out of new alternatives and solutions in lifelike situations without the consequences which in reality might be punishing. Role playing thus increases the participant's role flexibility in an atmosphere where he can safely take a chance with different kinds of behavior.

vations, there are a number of reasons why this technique may be of special value in therapeutic work with lower socioeconomic groups:

1. It is a technique that appears congenial with the low-income person's style: physical (action-oriented, doing *vs.* talking); down to earth, concrete, problem-directed; externally oriented rather than introspective; group-centered.<sup>12</sup>

2. It allows the practitioner (social worker, psychiatrist, educator) to reduce in an honest fashion the role distance between himself and the disadvantaged individual. It also permits the practitioner to learn more about the culture of the low-income person from the "inside" (through playing the latter's role in role reversal, for example).

3. It changes the setting and tone of what often appears to the low-income person as an office-ridden, institutional, bureaucratic, impersonal foreign world.

4. It appears to be an excellent technique for developing verbalization and verbal power in the educationally deprived person, and seems to be especially useful for the development of leadership skills:

In role-playing sessions we have had occasion to observe that the verbal performance of deprived children is markedly improved in the discussion period following the session. When talking about some *action* they have *seen*, deprived children are apparently able to verbalize much more fully. Typically, they *do not verbalize well in response to words alone*. They express themselves more readily when reacting to things they can see and do. Words as stimuli are not sufficient for them as a rule. Ask a juvenile delinquent who comes from a disadvantaged background what he doesn't like about school or the teacher and you will get an abbreviated, inarticulate reply. But have a

<sup>12</sup> While the style of the poor probably includes a strong emphasis on informality, humor, and warmth, the disadvantaged also like a content that is structured, definite, and specific. It is often assumed that role playing is highly unstructured, open and free. In part this is true, particularly in the early phase of setting the problem and mood. But in the middle and later phases (especially the role-training stage), where the effort is made to teach very specific behaviors, role playing can be highly structured, reviewing in minute detail the various operations to be learned (such as how to run a meeting, organize a conference, talk to a housing manager). Educationally disadvantaged people appear to prefer a *mood* or feeling tone that is informal and easy, but a *content* that is more structured and task-centered. Role playing may suit both needs.

group of these youngsters act out a school scene in which someone plays the teacher, and you will discover a stream of verbal consciousness that is almost impossible to shut off.<sup>13</sup>

Some cautions are in order, however. As Young and Rosenberg pointed out some years ago, role playing with low-income groups should assiduously avoid the theatrical aspects often connected with psychodrama.<sup>14</sup> Role playing seems to be more easily accepted by disadvantaged people when there are no stage or lighting effects, and when it is conducted very simply and directly. In work with homemakers and school aides from low-income groups, for example, it was found that they were able and willing to participate in role playing almost immediately, with practically no warm-up or even preparatory discussions to explain the technique.

Indeed, it sometimes appears that the more preparation and discussion prior to role playing, the more resistant and fearful low-income people become. In view of this, it is best to introduce role playing directly through a discussion centered on a specific problem, such as how to persuade a member of the family to come to the clinic. It can then easily be suggested that the group "do the problem" so that it can be dealt with more effectively.

It should also be pointed out that while low-income people readily accept the basic techniques, including role reversal, they are far less accepting of such features as "doubles," "soliloquies," and the like. More advanced technology of this nature seems to arouse feelings of inadequacy ("I'm not an actor"), and although it is possible to utilize them, these techniques require considerably more preparation than is needed with middle-class audiences.

Finally, it is important, as Levit and Jennings warn,<sup>15</sup> to guard against the overuse of role playing and to keep in mind that it should be employed intermittently for well-defined purposes—as a stimulus for discussion, for example.

*The use of nonprofessionals.*—The use of indigenous personnel drawn from low-income communities can perhaps be a decisive

<sup>13</sup> Frank Riessman, *The Culturally Deprived Child* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1963), p. 77.

<sup>14</sup> Bruce F. Young and Morris Rosenberg, "Role-Playing as a Participation Technique," *Journal of Social Issues*, V (1949), 42-45.

<sup>15</sup> Gertrude Levit and Helen Jennings, "Learning through Role-Playing," in *How to Use Role-Playing* (Chicago: Adult Education Association, 1960), p. 10.

factor in helping treatment agencies reorganize their approaches to low-income people. Neighborhood people functioning as non-professionals appear to be highly successful in developing rapport with low-income clients, including the most deprived and disadvantaged individuals in the community.<sup>16</sup> Their success seems to stem from the fact that they are similar to the clients in terms of background, style, language, ethnicity, and interests.

For this reason, and also because they serve as excellent role models, we recommend that a great many more nonprofessionals be employed in hospitals and social agencies in various capacities. One such capacity which we feel has an important potential but has thus far been little utilized is as an auxiliary in group treatment. Under the guidance of the professional therapist or group leader, the nonprofessional aide can participate in the group therapy sessions and perform the valuable function of maintaining continuity of contact with the participants by visiting each of them daily between sessions. Moreover, the integration of the aide's home visiting and extrasession experiences with the patient could be integrated into the group sessions, thus enriching and enhancing their therapeutic value.

*The "helper" therapy principle.*—What appears to be one of the most effective treatment mechanisms—the use of people in trouble to help other people in trouble—may have special significance in a therapeutic model for the poor. While it may be uncertain whether the people who *receive* help are always benefited, it seems clearer that those who *give* the help profit from their role. This appears to be the case in a wide variety of group "therapies," including Synanon (for drug addicts), Recovery Incorporated (for psychologically disturbed people), Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Chicago YMCA detached workers program for delinquents.<sup>17</sup>

Cressey formulates this principle as one of his five social psychological principles for the rehabilitation of criminals:

<sup>16</sup> Frank Riessman, "The Revolution in Social Work: the New Nonprofessional," 1963; mimeographed.

<sup>17</sup> We are not suggesting that there is good research evidence that these programs are effective; but various reports, many of them admittedly impressionistic, point more to improvement in the givers of help than in the receivers. Careful research to evaluate these programs is needed.



The most effective mechanism for exerting group pressure on members will be found in groups so organized that criminals are induced to join with noncriminals for the purpose of changing other criminals. A group in which criminal A joins with some noncriminals to change criminal B is probably most effective in changing criminal A not B. . . .<sup>18</sup>

Community programs that utilize indigenous nonprofessionals as homemakers, community organizers, youth workers, and the like record similar experiences. Some of these people have had fairly serious problems in the recent past. Some were former delinquents. It has been observed, however, that in the course of their helping role their own problems diminish greatly and they appear to grow remarkably.<sup>19</sup>

We suspect that while the helper principle probably has universal therapeutic application, it may be especially useful in group treatment programs with low-income people for two reasons:

1. It may circumvent the special interclass role-distance difficulties that arise from the middle-class-oriented therapy (and therapist) being at odds with the low-income clients' expectations and style. The alienation that many low-income clients feel toward professional treatment agents and the concomitant rapport difficulties may be greatly reduced by utilizing the low-income person himself as the helper-therapist.

2. It may be a principle which is especially attuned to the co-operative trends in lower socioeconomic groups and cultures. In this sense it may be beneficial to both the helper (the model) and the helped.

The helper principle has wide implications for various types of group work (detached workers and youth groups, group discussions with job trainees, groups at halfway houses, tenant groups), and for group therapy as well. Since the idea basically is to structure and restructure the groups so that different group members play the helper role at different times, the principle can be utilized in a great variety of therapeutic programs which make use of some form of group process to effect change in the individual.

<sup>18</sup> Rita Volkman and Donald R. Cressey, "Differential Association and the Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts," *American Journal of Sociology*, LXIX (1963), 139.

<sup>19</sup> See Gertrude Goldberg, "The Use of Untrained Neighborhood Workers in a Homemaker Program," unpublished Mobilization for Youth report, 1963.



*New family approaches.*—Rachel Levine, working at the Henry Street Mental Hygiene Clinic, has developed an unusual and apparently effective type of treatment in the home which she calls the technique of “demonstration.” In essence, the approach consists of the treatment agent bringing simple games, cards, and clay to the multiproblem home, and engaging as many members of the family as possible in these activities. When family conflicts arise around the games, they are discussed and worked out by the social worker right on the spot. Aside from the fact that this approach is much more involving than most office discussions, “it also eliminates the distortions which are common when conflict situations are reported after the fact and discussed in the office.”<sup>20</sup> (Levine also uses role playing in the home treatment approach.)

Spiegel’s approach emphasizes “the importance of the extended family and the community to the functioning of the individual.” He states:

Although therapy concentrates mainly on the mother, father and child, we attempt to see and make ourselves known to a wide assortment of relatives. This means that we become assimilated, to a certain extent, to the lineal chains of influence which bear upon the pathologic deviations in the family members. In addition, members of the therapeutic team become known, not simply as individuals, but also as members of a readily identifiable organization. This approximation of individuals and organizations reduces the fear of the strange, unknown group and, simultaneously, raises its prestige.<sup>21</sup>

Spiegel has developed some striking modifications in the traditional setting of psychotherapy: “The therapists have at times attended family celebrations, have accompanied the father to his place of work, and have conducted therapeutic interviews in this setting, as well as in trucks, bars, and other unusual places.”<sup>22</sup>

*Sociotherapy and involvement.*—Frequently it is found that the psychological difficulties of an individual appear to diminish in importance when the individual becomes involved in some activity or social movement, which may vary from a religious organi-

<sup>20</sup> Rachel A. Levine, “Treatment in the Home,” *Social Work*, IX, No. 1 (1964), 22.

<sup>21</sup> John P. Spiegel, “Some Cultural Aspects of Transference and Countertransference,” in Jules H. Masserman, M.D., ed., *Individual and Familial Dynamics* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1959), p. 180.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

zation to a hobby, to a labor union, to a block committee. Wittenberg found, for example, that participation in a neighborhood block committee led to marked personality development and growth in a woman on welfare, who despite some leadership potential had considerable personal difficulty.<sup>23</sup> Wittenberg's approach combined casework, group work, and community organization principles in a program directed toward "personality adjustment through social action," or what might be termed "sociotherapy." Here "the organization is the tool, while personality growth is the goal. . . . Essentially, this is using whatever available healthy ego structure there is and building from there by using the environmental pressures as a catalytic agent."<sup>24</sup>

Many low-income clients, because they are members of the Negro and Spanish-speaking minority groups, have great interest, sometimes manifest, sometimes latent, in the present-day movements and community organizations that represent their aspirations. Treatment agents accustomed to more clinical models tend to underemphasize the therapeutic possibilities of these types of involvement.

While certainly opposing any mechanical pressuring of all Negro clients to become interested in the Negro movement, we would argue that therapists should be alert to such possibilities whenever the client shows even slight interest in this direction. There are two reasons for advocating this:

1. Use is made of a possible source of strength in the client and his traditions that is independent of the therapist. Continued dependence and the tendency to deepen attention upon pathology, so characteristic of much treatment, are thus avoided.

2. A spread effect, a self-generator of positive change, is put into motion, and it may lead the client to feel a growing sense of power and conviction which transfers to various areas of his life, his family, his friends, and the community, and this indirectly produces broad behavioral modifications and feedback effects.

<sup>23</sup> Rudolph M. Wittenberg, "Personality Adjustment through Social Action," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, XVIII (1948), 207-21.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 208, 220.

We are reminded in this connection of the success claimed by the Black Muslim movement in curtailing the use of drugs and alcohol among some of the members who previously had been active addicts and alcoholics. If their contentions are accurate, one must acknowledge that the effect of social ideology is quite impressive, regardless of one's particular convictions about the Muslim movement.

Marshall<sup>25</sup> points up the issue by noting that the social worker who just tries to change the drug addict "without offering him a faith in addition"—without embodying this change in a "central ideology" that might involve the addict—has a much harder task than does the Muslim movement. It is striking that there appears to have been "a sharp decline in the incidence of crime among the Negro population of Montgomery, Alabama, during the year of the boycott [1955]." <sup>26</sup>

In countering the sociotherapeutic approach, it is sometimes contended that although a particular symptom may disappear, it is merely displaced and is expressed in different form in the very nature of the new involvement. In support of this thesis, irrational, distorted, and inappropriate aspects of the client's behavior in the new activity are sought and cited. There is little doubt that this pattern operates on some occasions and perhaps partially in all such cases, but as an over-all criticism it appears far too oversimplified. It overlooks at least two important possibilities. One is that the new behavior may have emerged from, or taken root in, non-pathological aspects of the patient's personality (the "conflict-free portion of the ego").<sup>27</sup> The other possibility—and perhaps one more appealing to the traditional clinician—is the likelihood that the new behavior pattern may be a well-sublimated expression of

<sup>25</sup> Kenneth Marshall, speech on Negro culture, Mobilization for Youth training program, 1962.

<sup>26</sup> T. Kahn, *Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Igal Rodenko Printer, 1960), quoted by Jacob R. Fishman, M.D., and Frederic Solomon, M.D., "Youth and Social Action: I. Perspectives on the Student Sit-in Movement," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, XXX (1963), 876.

<sup>27</sup> See John Cumming and Elaine Cumming, *Ego & Milieu* (New York: Atherton Press, 1962), pp. 13-14, for an illuminating application of Heinz Hartmann's concept of a "conflict-free portion" of the ego.

the patient's character. In either case, there is much room for therapeutic guidance to insure against negative symptom displacement.

Unquestionably, there are some dangers in this involvement approach, but perhaps it is time to err in new directions.

In the past decade, two trends have emerged in the field of psychiatry: a physiological trend highlighted by the appearance of a variety of new drugs; and an environmental-social trend reflected in community psychiatry, social psychiatry, milieu therapy, and so forth. It is striking that these two developments appear to be most in harmony with the treatment expectations and desires of low-income patients. It is possible, too, that physiological and environmental psychiatry are also most relevant, not only to the expectations of blue-collar people, but to their actual problems as well.

It may be that intrapsychic, psychodynamic treatment is more suited to middle-class expectations and problems, while social and physiological therapies are more appropriate for low-income problems. This is probably an oversimplification, however. What is more likely is that the emphasis in treatment should perhaps be class-related but that each stratum could probably benefit from treatment at the various levels: intrapsychic and interpersonal, environmental, and physiological. Thus, low-income treatment programs might utilize social and physiological orientations as their starting point (and, in general, use them more extensively), but would nevertheless be concerned with internal psychological forces, and might perhaps give these factors greater attention as the therapy progressed. On the other hand, therapy attuned to middle-class clients might begin with the psychological level and move outward toward the environment and inward toward the physiological.

In a sense, the emphasis on environmental and physiological causes, in part powered by the needs of low-income clientele, may contribute to the further development of a universal psychiatry. Much of what has been said here may have wider implications than our low-income focus might seem to imply.

SUMMARY MODEL

*Middle-Class Psychotherapy vs. Low-Income Expectations*

The following is a model for contrasting the middle-class character of psychotherapy with the expectations of low-income individuals. The contrast is intentionally presented in the form of extremes or ideal types in order to clarify the differences.

	<i>Middle-Class Model</i>	<i>Low-Income Beliefs, Expectations, and Preferences</i>
Goals	Self-actualization, growth, understanding	Specific behavior change: vocational, marital, health
Cause of problem	Internal, self, emotional, psychological, past (childhood, family)	External (environmental), physiological, caused in present or recent past
Setting	Office	Home visit
Agent	Psychiatrist-psychologist (non-medical in outlook and appearance); segmented role relationship of professional to professional, where the "service" motivation of the psychiatrist is accepted	Doctor and clergy; more rounded, informal, person-centered relationship; motivation of the psychologist or caseworker often not understood, or looked upon suspiciously
"Defense" mechanisms stressed	Rationalization; isolation-intellectualization and loss of affect; self-blame and introjection; compensation and reaction formation	Externalization-projection; scapegoating; "acting out"; somatization; withdrawal; primitive denial
Cognitive style	Intellectual, introspective, highly verbal, quick, clever, deductive, temporal	Physical, motoric, visual, spatial, slow, careful, inductive, action-centered, verbal around the concrete stimulus
Therapeutic processes employed	Do-it-yourself, change-yourself responsibility	Formal and informal direction
	Individual therapy (or individualized groups)	Group therapy, role-playing, peer-centered
	Introspective, "think"-centered, word-focused	Work, action (talk deprecated)
	Unstructured, permissive	Structure and organization
	Stress on the past	Focused on present
	Self-focused	More emphasis on family and group
	Physically inactive, lying down, free association	Moving, gesturing, acting, role-playing, face-to-face
	Stress on resistance and transference	Problem-focused
	Symbolic, often circuitous interpretations and explanations	Simple, concrete, demonstrable explanations
	Intensive transference and countertransference	Less intense relationships; informal friendliness, respect, sympathetic, nonpatronizing understanding

# *Involvement of Low-Income People in Planned Community Change*

by BERNARD M. SHIFFMAN

THE EUPHEMISM, "socially and economically deprived," applied to low-income people, usually refers to the residents of the Negro ghettos, and we know that the only major welfare services in these communities are public welfare departments, public health services, and public education. In support of these services, we find the police, public utilities, some store-front churches, and, recently, protest group leadership. All these welfare services have proved to be of limited help and most often have operated in such a manner as further to corrode the quality of family living, and to strengthen the individual's alienation from the mainstream of the American style of life.

Social group work, whether as defined by the practitioners or as taught by the academicians, is rarely to be found in practice in the communities in which I have been spending my working life. The method, when identified in isolation in the group-serving agency, inevitably is effective with the school-aged child but has little influence or impact on the civil rights movement, the Viet Nam "teach-ins," the political reapportionment issue, public welfare standards, or the redistribution of political power. In short, the social work profession, regardless of its specialization, finds itself in complete harmony with the educator, employment expert, psychiatrist, doctor, housing planner—irrelevant to the strivings and/or the despair of many of the Negroes who are poor. Redlich, psychiatrist and coauthor of *Social Class and Mental Illness*<sup>1</sup> recently said in a planning committee meeting:

<sup>1</sup> August B. Hollingshead and Fredrick C. Redlich, M.D., *Social Class and Mental Health* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958).



We in the helping professions are not used to having the consumers tell us what they need or want. Since we became expert professional authorities, we have professionally prescribed for the individual members and planned for the community. We, psychiatrists, are learning the meaning of today's social revolution, and it is simply that we have to learn how the helping professions can hear and respond to what the lay community wants. We cannot tell them what we think they need.

To survive, the helping professions must become utilitarian and functional. Social welfare experts, health practitioners, educators, political scientists, employment and housing and recreation experts, have to learn how to join forces in a collaborative effort. Through multiple antennae and supersonic receivers, we must develop a common intake of the sounds of the urban drums and an ability to translate picketing, sit-ins, protests, drug addiction, school dropouts, illegitimacy, bizarre and not so bizarre behavior, into requests for help which is as meaningful to the consumer as it is to the producer of services. Social workers who specialize in the social group work method, if they are going to be helpful, will have to function as contributing and supportive members of a much larger team whose function might well be first, to develop an orderly system which will provide some material security and self-esteem for the adult group leader of the family unit with dignity—with dignity and respect and not by "a war on the poor." If we fail to join forces in an interdisciplinarian effort, social group work will be as useless as unskilled workers in the automated age.

Nothing is more ridiculous than the current bastardization of the good, sound, and sane notion that the poor should be involved in affecting social change. The election to decision-making roles of the poor, who qualify by showing their ineligibility to file an income tax return, according to a Philadelphia news story, is the pendulum pushed to its furthest point.

To the best of my knowledge, the Negro poor, like most of the white members of the affluent community, do not want committee membership, community action projects to read and to judge, and a seat in the Republican-Democratic political process. It is true they do not want to be done *to*, do not want to wait in lines for handouts, or be kept under surveillance by welfare de-

partments or pushed around by police; and when wronged, they would appreciate a fair weighing of the scales of justice. They want an adequate income, a decent house to live in and a nice neighborhood; a fair chance at books, learning, education; they want an automobile; a doctor or a dentist when they need one; a chance to dress up, spend money foolishly; and an equal right to be wrong, middle-class, or Republican. When something is being done which will affect them, they wish to be consulted and listened to, for their desires should be part of the final decision. They do not want anything special or extraordinary. Some do want to be on advisory committees. Some have political aspirations, an ache for power, and a share of the political spoils—the Adam Clayton Powells, the Mayors Wagner, Daley, and Lee, the Rev. Martin Luther King, and Sargent Shriver are responsive to even the disorganized potential power of “us.”

From the early beginnings of charity, philanthropy, or organized social welfare, there has been an expressed dedication to the principle that informed, interested citizens, participants and consumers, should be involved in decision-making to the degree possible and that no single service could solve the complex problems faced by people who are poor. One early leader wrote that one may reasonably expect that at some time or other, the conscience of the community will awake and admonish it that the poor man has just as much right to help for his mind as he now has for the surgeon's means of saving life . . .

The task will then arise for us to adapt our technique to new conditions. I have no doubt that the validity of our psychological assumptions will impress the uneducated too, but we shall need to find the simplest and most natural expressions for our theoretical doctrines. We shall probably discover that the poor are even less ready to part with their neuroses than the rich, because the hard life that awaits them when they recover has no attraction, and illness in them gives them more claim to help of others. Possibly we may often only be able to achieve something if we combine aid for the mind with some material support.<sup>2</sup>

That was written by Freud. I can assure you, however, that the New Haven program of human conservation, renewal, or community action, was not based on a psychoanalytic model.

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud, M.D., *Collected Papers* (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1950), II, 401-2.

In New Haven, in September of 1962, a community action program, known as Community Progress, Inc. (CPI), was launched with the stated purpose of opening opportunities to those people who had been denied access to education, employment, training, housing, social services, and so forth. This event had a ten-year history of preparation. Briefly, in 1952, an Irish-American politician was elected mayor after two unsuccessful attempts. He was committed to urban renewal and planned to stop the business decay and slum housing blight which were rendering the city's inhabitants helpless in apathy and despair. With his election, he moved into a vigorous physical rebuilding program which was as ambitious a plan as had been undertaken anywhere except in the bombed-out cities of Europe. He tore down the slums and the sleazy downtown marginal business properties. Neighborhood citizen advisory groups were organized and gave sanction to this redevelopment program. A blue-ribbon, citizen, city-wide committee was also organized to endorse the major surgery and the rebuilding plans. In this demolition process, the mayor, a man whose identification with the inner city working class and the marginal individual was very close, discovered that physical rebuilding was only a small part of the task of rebuilding a city. Of equal, if not more importance was what to do about the squalor, the illness, the apathy, and the suffering of the people who huddled in the slum buildings which were being removed. What were they to do when their protective coloration was destroyed, when the tenements were tipped over? He rediscovered the fact that the city was for people, that the major concern of a mayor had to be for its citizens.

The mayor began by asking for some staff work, by organizing study committees, by opening up communication between the various planning group staffs in redevelopment, education, housing, welfare. Studies of education facilities, of housing conditions, of health services, of library facilities, were undertaken. Plans were proposed and eliminated. Gradually, a staff planning team was established which included the redevelopment agency (Housing Authority included), educators, and social welfare planners. Agencies and citizens fed ideas into the hopper. Technical studies were added, and an all-encompassing, ambitious proposal called "Open-

ing Opportunities" was produced, aimed at providing a community with a comprehensive plan for attacking the causes of dependency.

The proposed package was turned down a number of times by the funding groups to which it was offered by the mayor of the city. Finally, after a complicated series of negotiations, the Ford Foundation agreed to finance a program supervised by a small voluntary board (without the poor) which had quasi-public overtones and which represented a coalition of the city government, the Board of Education, labor unions, Yale University, and the local social planning council. After the Ford grant, in quick succession, the President's Committee on the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency and the Department of Labor provided funds which, added to the city's own commitment and a local foundation grant, made possible the financing above the poverty level of a new operation which seriously addressed itself to the task of working with the socially and economically deprived.

Two facts must be understood in examining the New Haven community action program. Fact number one was that although it had many aspects of a demonstration project, it was first and foremost an action program designed to serve seven geographic areas in which more than 50 percent of the population of New Haven lived. The ideal size of the city, 158,000, made this possible. Fact number two was that in its historical development and as its objectives emerged it was seen as a comprehensive attack on the causes of dependency and was dedicated to enabling the existing institutions to change and to become relevant to the problems of the poor. Therefore, the planning group demanded the employment of an interdisciplinary task force in which social work could be supportive but not central. As a matter of fact, the CPI helped re-establish the Ohlin-Cloward proposition that people are most likely to be responsive when they are offered new opportunities rather than help with their social problems. Discover the strengths of the client and encourage him to use his strengths instead of plumbing his problems was the order of the day.

Social work has no monopoly on working within the opportunity system, so the original staff included a labor-political leader, a

political scientist with expertise in housing, a mediator with a law degree and knowledge of employment; social workers, who knew the public agencies and the planning field; educators, graduates of political science, English majors; researchers with practical and impractical experience. This cadre was enlarged by adding to it people who lived in the areas to be served, as neighborhood workers. These indigenous staff members work under close supervision. In 1962 a staff of ten began the planning to get the proposed opportunities under way. Today, over two hundred people are directly employed by the CPI, and many of us believe that it is only the beginning. Some think we are solving New Haven's unemployment problem via Parkinson's law. But no one really knows what it takes successfully to intervene in the complex poverty syndrome which has been institutionalized by the very agencies designed originally to solve it. For example, it is now common gossip that public welfare and public housing, originally offered as solutions to poverty, over the years have been so constructed as to institutionalize poverty. Both programs have been functioning with public sanction in such a way as to keep the poor below the poverty level.

It might be helpful to review the assumptions that undergird the CPI operation:

1. The CPI's basic goal is to get at the causes of poverty by finding ways to open opportunities, primarily in education and employment, for those who have been denied equal opportunities in these two vital areas. Other services are considered supportive to these two.

2. Where there is one poor social condition, such as housing, one usually finds chronic unemployment, inadequate education, and a deficit of social services of all kinds. It is vital that all these interlocking conditions be attacked at one time and on a broad scale. Since the causes of dependency seem to be interlocking, the action generated must be the result of a collaborative effort of a number of disciplines and methods. No one profession or specialist can accomplish it alone.

3. These indices of social breakdown are concentrated in identifiable neighborhoods. Therefore, the CPI program focuses on



the neighborhood unit, utilizing the community school concept and the neighborhood employment center as major instruments.

4. Since these programs were new for New Haven, we began with demonstrations, utilizing programs that had a maximum chance of succeeding, expanding them when there is a demand, resources, and proof of even limited success.

5. If proven or even popular programs are to be continued, the agencies created for that purpose will have to be sympathetic, willing, and convinced. Therefore, the CPI decided to work to the degree possible through existing institutions.

6. Programs will only succeed if they are responsive to the expressed needs of the people to whom they are directed; hence, the need for citizen involvement through neighborhood organization and the use of neighborhood people as full-time employees.

7. To direct various programs at one and the same time against a number of related problems—employment, education, health—the CPI had to find ways to end the traditional isolationism and bring agencies together in a working relationship. The CPI assumed that services could be coordinated on a city-wide level and integrated on the neighborhood level, with the help of neighborhood planning teams.

8. While recognizing the need for legislative and political action if equal opportunities were to be attained, these were not to be the CPI's direct responsibility, but that of organizations established for this purpose (CORE, NAACP, the Human Relations Council, and so on). These we must try to influence but not control.

9. Since the CPI is a human, imperfect organization, it must constantly examine what is being done in order to remain flexible, ready to change into another form, provide service, or fade out of existence.

With these assumptions, we began. It was obvious that employment was central, and of equal significance was the educational system which was either graduating unemployables or forcing out of school and into employment young people without skills who would undo whatever the CPI could accomplish within the employment field. While not able to act directly, and without the



competence to function within the school system, the CPI was able to provide resources and support to the Board of Education. The CPI recruited for adult literacy classes and jointly worked to establish the community school concept—not a new idea, but the idea of the 1930s brought up to date so that the school is seen as an educational, community-recreation center out of which all kinds of services from health to group work can be made available.

The Youth Development Grant from the President's Committee on the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency financed a project which provided for three trained and experienced group work supervisors who were assigned two primary functions: (1) to establish and coordinate small group services; and (2) to serve as part of a community school neighborhood team whose membership would include usually a neighborhood organizer, an assistant principal, a recreation supervisor, a community nurse, a number of neighborhood workers, a social welfare worker, a librarian, youth bureau and probationary staff, private agency personnel, and, at times, a legal advisor. When the group work practitioners attempted to function as group work coordinators, they found, as we have learned in other places, at other times, "that you cannot tie a string around a nonexistent package." First, we had to establish small group services before they could be coordinated. This was also true in the case of all the program elements that we were going to coordinate and integrate on behalf of the low-income, powerless residents of the worn-out neighborhoods of the city.

Most communities, new or old, need additional services rather than another level of coordination. Community action programs under the Office of Economic Opportunity provide new resources for services as well as for coordination, for expansion of existing services as well as for designing new services or making present ones accessible to those whom we wish to serve. In New Haven we are in the process of expanding our social group work services so that each of our community school neighborhoods will have a trained group work supervisor. The expansion will be achieved by the maximum utilization of VISTA workers, college work-study students, indigenous neighborhood workers, and volunteers.

As a result of our two years of experience, there is a strengthened conviction that staff workers to assist small groups, whether natural ones or by-products of other program elements, are essential to support a comprehensive community action program.

It is my privilege to hold administrative and seminar sessions with the CPI group workers in New Haven. We are learning a great deal; for example, that staff, teachers, preschool teachers, need experience with small groups, which may be staffed by a psychiatrist, an intergroup relations consultant, or a work crew foreman as well as a trained social group worker.

Mrs. Edith Woodard, one of the group workers in training, reports that she is not using the "tired, old, group work process" with the social clubs or friendship groups of the traditional Jewish Center or YM-YWCAs, but is occupied in working with small groups which meet to deal with real, life-size problems. "Most frequently, we are forming groups around specific opportunities," and the worker moves toward developing a meaningful relationship in which the individuals may assume various significant roles as they are ready, willing, and able. One of her illustrations describes her activity with a group of parents who were anxious about the safety and behavior of their children on the school buses. The group worker, functioning as a representative of the settlement house but assigned to the community school team, convened some of the parents at the community school. The parents discussed their fears and their problems. The group worker helped them clarify the problems which could be corrected and set up a second meeting with the school administrator responsible for the bussing program. They explained their concerns to him directly, and a dialogue ensued. At the third meeting, twenty-five parents of the twenty-six children attended and suggestions offered by the adults were discussed. The school administrator accepted the feasible suggestions and put them into effect.

Through these three meetings which the worker labeled as "stage number one," the group came to understand and trust the worker and became comfortable with her since she had been helpful in solving a real problem. From this point, interested parents, forming a smaller group, asked to meet with the worker with the

discussion to be focused on other areas, especially the total racial imbalance matter of which the bussing was only a part. The parents were troubled: "Our children were supposed to be so far behind—how do they stack up with the white kids?" The worker helped the parents see that they could ask these questions of, and get answers from, Board of Education officials. Most of these parents were deeply concerned but never dreamed of asking the school officials. With the worker's help, the group invited the Board of Education's administrative director of the neighborhood to discuss significant educational questions, such as teacher-parent-pupil relationships. This plan has already spread to include small parent groups who will meet regularly and will learn, and, in fact, teach, the school system about their reactions to the curriculum content, school enrichment programs, teaching materials, and the special needs of men and out-of-school youth from the parents' point of view.

Mrs. Woodard concludes that the school system is consulting the consumer in a very real way:

If this were pursued sensitively, we could move toward a more creative and realistic curriculum which could enhance the education of the children and gain greater cooperation from parents, many of whom covertly encourage their children to express hostility toward the school system. Perhaps as important, if not more so, is the fact that the door to participation in important decision-making has been cracked—and this in turn affects the self-esteem, the self-image, of the parents.

This cannot be underestimated. The need for self-esteem on the part of "habitual losers" is invaluable if there is any seriousness in working toward community change.

In this instance, the formerly segregated school has been balanced with an upper-middle-class white group. One Negro youngster expressed the idea that "those white kids' parents run downtown every time something goes wrong. Our mothers and fathers never even come to school." To see that their parents, first, *are interested* and, second, *can change* or influence the situation in a positive fashion is an important boost for such disadvantaged youth.

Mrs. Woodard identifies "powerlessness," among other factors,

as one of the deterrents to a positive self-image. Small-group organization, in which individuals can participate comfortably and effectively, builds a sense of power. Without the group worker, the parents' meetings might not have been held; but if they had been held, they would have been sponsored by the school authorities not the parents, which probably would have changed the climate of the meeting.

In the series of meetings held, the school authorities were invited by the parents. It took some intervention on the part of the social worker to get the school people to move from talking to listening and the parents from listening to talking.

In summary, this example suggests that when people are helped to confront issues and authority and are really consulted, the individuals change and the impact is felt in the neighborhood. As Mrs. Woodard records: "They will not be the same people again; neither will the social system which sets up this dialogue."

We see here the social worker functioning as part of a community team, exercising her social work skills in direct contact with an *ad hoc* group which requires professional skill. In the community action program in New Haven, as in the last forty years of social work practice, the possibility of having trained personnel on hand and ready to exercise social group work skill in all the groups which need such service is remote. This has pushed us into innovating, compromising, and stretching natural endowments of available personnel perhaps further than is reasonable.

In New Haven, even though we were using "delinquency funds," we did not move into street gang work. Perhaps it was because the gang phenomenon was not a factor in New Haven's adolescent society; perhaps it was because gang work was passé; or because we were committed to a family-neighborhood focus, stressing opportunities rather than problems. Instead, we invested considerable resources in employment programs and the work crew. These work crews perform a variety of functions from painting day care centers to filing old records. Their primary function is to teach work habits, not vocational skills. This crew is a group of five to seven adolescents who are assigned to a foreman. His task is to help the individuals develop good work habits; encourage them to util-

ize the remedial educational programs; and get them to the appropriate services so that they may make best use of the work crew. Although the work crew members are, in the main, school dropouts with court and police records, some are high school graduates. The foremen, a cross section of well-motivated young adults, are drawn from schoolteachers, truck drivers, factory workers, manual workers, secretaries, office workers, welfare workers, and so on. Currently, we are working with approximately twenty male crews and five female crews. Even if we wanted to insert a group worker, it would be impossible from the point of view of the number of groups and the lack of personnel. Instead, we supervise, in-service "train," share knowledge, so that foremen learn to utilize the small group to support the individual as he participates in the crew and moves on either to skill training, on-the-job training, or to direct placement on jobs. In addition, foremen are encouraged to involve the parents in purposeful meetings aimed at increasing their understanding of the process and program their children are going through; to discuss with them the implications of the adjustments in their welfare checks which public welfare workers may be forced to make because their children are earning; and to encourage them to write the Governor and their Representatives, who are considering a major revision of the state's public welfare laws.

This example is used to illustrate the idea that group workers have too often been so busy trying to form special kinds of groups that they have failed to utilize their skill and resources to serve existing groupings of people, with strong motivation and some structure other than agency, who are responsive to help, and who have another chance to become "makers" instead of "losers." Other examples of nonagency groups are the well-known block clubs served by workers who are recruited from the neighborhood; consumer and buying clubs which are being organized with the assistance of the staff of the local cooperative; groups of unwed mothers who are being served by visiting nurses; advisory citizen groups who are being served by the professional in charge of the particular service; and "Link groups" developed by the Wider City Parish. These Link clubs are groups of no more than four members who



are identified by social workers, guidance staff, and teaching staff of the school and served by local college students who volunteer to serve as big brothers or sisters, helpers with homework, and guides to the wider world which exists around the corner of the ghettos or slums.

Dr. John Spencer, of the University of Toronto School of Social Work, describes an effort to deal with the stresses and strains of a housing population in Bristol, England.<sup>3</sup> Through the home advice group, doctors, and social workers, it was learned that a number of mothers had family problems of considerable difficulty. A group worker assigned to meet with these mothers worked with them for fifteen months. She recognized that these women needed a less formal and less activity-centered group. They needed a group from which they could gain support to cope with the strains and stresses of family life. The group worker did not schedule speakers, or arrange outings, but encouraged and facilitated activity originated by the members themselves, which they had neither the energy nor the initiative to pursue otherwise. Above all, the group and the worker helped them be more understanding and tolerant of one another and to make relationships which would be a source of support. Only after the mothers had participated in the group over a period of time did the worker gain the insight that explained their symptoms of social and family disorganization.

Four facts characterized the members of this group:

1. *The tragedies of their early upbringing.*—Most came from broken homes; they were immature, with a heavy dependence on their infants.

2. *The consequences of living on a small and fluctuating budget.*—Unemployment, debt, and rent arrears were common.

3. *The poverty of their social relationships.*—None of the mothers was able to maintain warm and friendly relationships with neighbors or with social organizations, such as neighborhood clubs and churches. They were a lonely and isolated group who felt inadequate and were unhappy over the criticisms they had incurred from their welfare workers because of their inability either to

<sup>3</sup> John Spencer, in collaboration with Joy Tuxford and Norman Dennis, *Stress and Release in an Urban Estate* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1964), Chap. V.



manage their households or to care for their children. They appreciated the interest of the clergy but were angry at the snobishness of the church congregations.

4. *The continual illness of some member of their family and their dependence on the doctor.*—There was a continual round of illness in these families. While labeling these ailments “psychosomatic” might be misleading, there is no doubt that a large mental health factor was involved. They looked to the doctor for help, advice, and support.

The value of the group lay in the support which it provided for women who needed help. It was support rather than therapy. The worker’s aim was to stimulate independence slowly as they grew in confidence but not to do things for them. She first met them by calling at their homes, explaining how she had heard about them from doctors and social workers, and asked them if they would like to meet together; later on, she would drop in for a chat.

The worker emphasized the permissiveness and passivity of her role, but these qualities are not to be taken as an indication of neutrality of values or of inactivity. “The worker acts professionally by allowing the members to cast her in the role most suited to their own emotional needs.”<sup>4</sup> Her skill consists in recognizing this diversity of needs and in acting, not necessarily in the expected way, but in the way best suited to meet these needs.

During the group meetings, the worker saw her role as that of steering the group away from irrelevancies, being the balance of power, supporting leadership, interpreting the services of other agencies. Nor was her work confined to the group. She visited homes, joined in local festivals, fairs, street parties, socials, trips, and visited children who were away from home.

The group moved from meeting in community facilities to meetings in individual members’ homes. Not all the women could bear the demands of the group, and a number failed to keep up their attendance. The stresses in their families were such that the group was too difficult for them. It is all too easy to take for granted the normal ability of people to participate in groups. We must continually remind ourselves that there are situations, espe-

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

cially with people who live in poverty, where this does not exist.

It should be noted that the group did not want new members; that although the worker tried to move the group from a dependence on her, when she left the city, they did not meet. What became clear was the continuing need of people under severe stress and strain for the enabling services of a worker and their own inability to plan and organize group meetings without skilled and sensitive guidance. Group formation was impossible without leadership. Dr. Spencer adds, "This is certainly not a job for the student, the immature or the inexperienced worker."<sup>5</sup>

What stands out from this demonstration is the need for a small, accepting, supportive group for people undergoing stress and strain and the need for these groups to have continuing social worker support. "Here is one of the unmet needs of modern society," John Spencer writes.

"Instant" citizen involvement and participation in affecting planned community change are impossible. It is further complicated when the citizens to be involved are poor. Natural, small, functional group experiences supported by a worker may be the only way, the essential way, if we really wish to foster participation which may result in involvement. This will not necessarily produce "vote support," which is too often what the political leadership wants in exchange for being a "do-gooder."

Forming small groups in the adolescent, adult, and elderly subgroups in order to give one a group work experience is a waste of scarce resources, but staff-served small groups for people under stress can be most supportive. However, when we combine group work skill and knowledge in the team concerned with employment, education, and helping families with their problems, it becomes a mutual assistance pact which has a reciprocal strengthening effect.

Being poor, socially and economically deprived, or being rich does not automatically qualify one to serve on the boards, commissions, and committees that make the big decisions. Nor does an election process, no matter how democratic or well mean-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

ing, produce members who are qualified or equipped to deal with the complexity of urban problem-solving.

There is considerable evidence that people who are poor and who are carrying the additional burdens of ill-health, limited education, and uncertain employment are not joiners and are unfamiliar with the ways in which the machinery of decision-making operates. Again, this is not to say that we cannot find qualified knowledgeable poor who would join if given supporting opportunities—and who just might create new machinery for getting community decisions.

Citizen participation or involvement should not be equated with sitting on the Advisory Board of Sargent Shriver's Office of Economic Opportunity. One may participate on a consumer level, especially if there is an opportunity to reject the offer of help; or one can participate as a reactor to proposals in an advisory capacity; or as an employee in a position to communicate community needs and reactions; or as a part of the management, policy-making group. Participation which is not relevant to the interests, needs, and ability of the participant is as phony as the role played by the Negro member of the community fund board in a Southern—or Northern—city. Those of us who are demanding that the low-income, socially deprived assume new decision-making roles tend to overlook the skills and attributes required for such activity. Dr. Thomas Gladwin suggests that these skills include: an orientation toward the future; an ability to delay immediate gratification for future good; ability to deal with the concepts and ideas; a belief that one can control one's destiny and thus planning is worth while; and acceptance of the fact that hard and dull work is often necessary.

The political strategy of citizen involvement is too often only a desire for sanction of a decided course of action, an insurance of votes and support. This was true in the urban renewal programs, with which social welfare workers failed to connect. Citizen support is what the politician usually wants, not involvement. Social workers, in the planning field, have not wanted much more. In this respect, "the goals of OEO are truly a social revolution," re-

ported Edward T. Morgan in a radio broadcast, "which is upsetting to all, even those who are administering the program." Social welfare practitioners, in spite of natural skepticism, should not fight the proposal of the Administration for maximum citizen participation but should capitalize on and cooperate with the demand—join with them, and struggle to keep true to an ethical code of practice.

The current war on poverty, like a number of wars we are currently engaged in, can be fought in an autocratic, totalitarian manner, or it can be fought and won in a democratic fashion with the soldiers understanding and involved "in a feasible manner." Fortunately, we cannot sit this one out; we have been drafted into this war. How we serve will depend on our convictions, values, and goals.

# *Adoption—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*

by *BERNICE Q. MADISON*

ADOPTION IN THE UNITED STATES is more than a hundred years old. Its history divides into three phases: the period of early legislation which established a legal adoptive process; the rise of specialized agencies authorized to provide adoptive services; and the period of new problems and increased agency responsibilities.

The first phase began in 1851 when Massachusetts passed the first adoption law with primary focus on safeguarding the interests of the child.

The second phase developed toward the end of the nineteenth century when many shortcomings of the early laws became apparent. The major flaw was that in many cases the judge had no way of knowing with certainty that "it was fit and proper for the adoption to take place." In 1917 Minnesota pioneered a general plan of protective services for all types of adoption. By 1954, more than forty states required a social study of the placements made independently of authorized agencies, thirty-four of these relied on their state department of social welfare for the study. Even today, however, some states do not require it.

Forces that exerted, and still exert, a profound influence on adoption were of two kinds: those stemming from changes in the larger social fabric; and those generated by new currents specific to social welfare institutions and the social work profession. Among the former were modifications in attitudes toward illegitimacy and adoption that reflected reactions to the increase in infertile marriages; the rise in illegitimacy; the lower infant mortality rate;

growing social mobility; and weakening of class stratification. Rigid views began to crack. Adoption became socially acceptable, approved for contributing to the strengthening of family life. More people began to realize that adoption is not only a legal but, more importantly, a social process which deeply affects natural and adoptive parents, the child, and society. Demands to curb gray and black markets in adoptions were given wide attention.

Changes in social welfare institutions and in social work that were especially important include the appearance of professional adoption agencies, whose growth and work have been immeasurably advanced by the U.S. Children's Bureau and the Child Welfare League of America; the development of state and county public welfare organizations after 1935; and the spread of social work education. It was in 1921 that Sophie van Sender Theis presented the first statement on sound adoption practice at the New York School of Philanthropy, and in 1924 that her follow-up study showed that of 269 children adopted through agencies, 88 percent had made a "capable" social adjustment in adult life.<sup>1</sup> By 1936 the Child Welfare League was querying its member agencies about their experience with adoption, and in 1938 issued the first set of standards for their guidance.

The third phase was initiated by the aftermath of the Second World War. Petitions to adopt rose from 16,000 in 1934 to 50,000 in 1944. At the same time, adoption agencies found themselves handicapped by poor public relations, coupled with specific accusations that they were slow to relinquish unrealistic requirements and cumbersome methods, doomed to provide adoption for only a part of the children who needed it. A sharp rise in independent adoptions signified impatience, and doubt about the value of service offered by licensed agencies. Little research was undertaken during this period, although the few completed studies showed that at least three quarters of adopted children were happy and successful in their new homes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sophie van Sender Theis, *How Foster Children Turn Out* (New York: State Charities Aid Association, 1924).

<sup>2</sup> Among these were: Marie Skodak and Harold M. Skeels, "A Final Follow-up Study of One Hundred Adopted Children," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, LXXV (1949), 85-125; Ruth F. Brenner, *A Follow-up Study of Adoptive Families* (New York: Child Adoption Research Committee, Inc., 1951); Catherine S. Amatrua,



This situation spurred agencies into action. Nationwide workshops on adoption practices and procedures, under auspices of the Child Welfare League, were held in 1948 and 1951, by the National Adoption Survey of the League, in 1954; and by the National Conference on Adoption in 1955. These undertakings revealed considerable unevenness in agency practice, gaps in knowledge, and a lamentable lack of services for difficult-to-place children—the older, the handicapped, the minority groups, those of mixed racial background, and brothers and sisters who needed to be kept together.<sup>3</sup>

Efforts to meet the heavy demand of the postwar period, and at a higher level of competence, have been especially pronounced in the past decade. This era has been characterized by expansion in services, strengthened research, a more concerted attack on the problem of placing the minority child, a more consistent use of basic knowledge, and emphasis on the professional nature of adoption. Throughout, these developments have been underpinned by a more sensitive perception of the community's role and by a genuine desire to incorporate into practice not only the knowledge that social workers gained from their own activities, but also the insights contributed by allied professions and disciplines.

*Expansion in services.*—According to data from the U.S. Children's Bureau, more than a million children were adopted between 1951 and 1962, a 51 percent increase. The more than 1,500,000 adopted children under eighteen years of age in our country constitute 2 percent of all our children. This rise resulted from expanding the volume of service by voluntary agencies and from bringing an ever growing number of public agencies into the field.

Fifty-two percent of the 121,000 children adopted in 1962 were taken by nonrelatives. While it is true that nonrelative adoptions

---

M.D., and Joseph V. Baldwin, M.D., "Current Adoption Practices," *Journal of Pediatrics*, XXXVIII (1951), 208-12; Mary E. Fairweather, "Early Placement in Adoption," *Child Welfare*, XXXI (1952), 3-8.

<sup>3</sup> Much of the historical material is based on Michael Schapiro, *A Study of Adoption Practice* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1956), I, 14-19; and *Adoptive Placement of Minority Group Children in the San Francisco Bay Area: a Study by MARCH* (San Francisco: Minority Adoption Recruitment of Children's Homes, 1959), pp. xi-xii.

arranged by social agencies appear to be increasing faster than nonrelative adoptions as a whole, the rate of increase of all nonrelative adoptions has slowed.

In nearly two out of three such adoptions in 1962 the child was placed by a social agency; the comparable proportion in 1954 was one out of two.

Four fifths of all nonrelative adoptions and one third of all relative adoptions were of illegitimate children. Adopted illegitimate children, however, constituted only a quarter of those born out of wedlock in the previous year.

Adoption statistics reflect the recent decrease in ratio between white applicants and available children to which several factors are contributing: primarily, an increase in the number of children placed, due to a more liberal definition of an "adoptable" child and the rising number of children legally freed for adoption; an increase in illegitimacy; and a decline in the number of married couples who are in the adoptive age group. It is important, however, to emphasize that this downward trend has not appeared in all communities nor in all agencies uniformly: many communities and some agencies have homes and no children; others are flooded with children and do not have enough homes.<sup>4</sup>

*Strengthened research.*—One notes the enlarging volume and greater sophistication of research in this field. Whether centered specifically on adoption, or on adoption as part of a broader child welfare investigation, research has become more systematic, addressed to questions of greater significance to practice, technically more competent.

A study attempting to discover why Negroes do not adopt children used the cross-sectional public opinion survey to gain insight into the attitudes of Negro couples toward adoption in two communities.<sup>5</sup> The most impressive follow-up was concerned with the outcome of more than four hundred independent placements.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Lydia F. Hylton, "Trends in Adoption, 1958-1962," *Child Welfare*, XLIV (1965), 377-86.

<sup>5</sup> Leila Calhoun Deasy and Olive Westbrooke Quinn, "The Urban Negro and Adoption of Children," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 400-407.

<sup>6</sup> Helen L. Witmer *et al.*, *Independent Adoptions; a Follow-up Study* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1963).

Two follow-up studies of agency placements are in progress. The first involves four New York agencies who are cooperating with the Child Welfare League in studying 100 families whose children are now between the ages of twenty-one and thirty years of age.<sup>7</sup> In the second, the League and the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs are studying 100 Caucasian families in 14 states who have adopted American Indian children.<sup>8</sup> The National Institute of Mental Health is carrying on three studies of the effects of adoption on children from institutions.<sup>9</sup> Two longitudinal studies are now going on: one in Delaware, in which adoptive parents are being rated during their early experience with the agency, thus providing baseline data with which to compare subsequent evaluational material; the other, in the Washington, D.C., area, in which the relationship between the age of the adopted child at the time of transfer from the foster family home to the adoptive home, and his future personality development, is being examined. The Children's Home Society of California is concerned with determining the characteristics of adoptive parents that are associated with the ability to care for hard-to-place children.<sup>10</sup>

Research has illumined the workings of current practice and has underscored the need for a new alignment between practitioners and researchers. Almost every aspect of practice is characterized by variations: some agencies use questionnaires, others do not; the types of questionnaire differ; there is no uniformity in the objectives and manner of conducting interviews and group meetings; there is no consistency about requiring certain kinds of information; there is no one preferred way in which statistics are produced and presented. The decision-making process, based mainly on clinical insight, often lacks formal structure, and the reliability of workers' judgments, not related to a uniform frame of reference

<sup>7</sup> David Fanshel, "Research in Child Welfare: a Critical Analysis," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 484-507.

<sup>8</sup> David Fanshel, "Indian Adoption Research Project," *Child Welfare*, XLIII (1964), 486-88.

<sup>9</sup> Harold M. Skeels, "Effects of Adoption on Children from Institutions," *Children*, XII (1965), 33-34.

<sup>10</sup> David Fanshel, "Research in Child Welfare: a Critical Analysis," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 484-507.

which would permit standardization, is questionable.<sup>11</sup> What we need are "evidence-oriented" practitioners and "practice-oriented" researchers.

Following the National Survey and the National Adoption Conference, a number of communities made special efforts to place Negro, Puerto Rican, American Indian, and Oriental children and children of Latin American and Mexican origin. Four major projects were established in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, and others followed in different parts of the country.<sup>12</sup>

The main objectives were to uncover conditions which hampered placement of minority children and to develop new techniques and imaginative approaches to the recruitment of adoptive homes. These projects created better understanding of adoption services and, in cooperation with other agencies and community groups, formulated proposals for strengthening adoption services. Thus, New York demonstrated how groups in a highly complex community can be actively involved in meeting a social problem and in successful recruitment. Chicago focused upon the importance of casework in proceeding with adoption or in helping clients to see that adoption is not right for them. Los Angeles illustrated the value of a positive approach in interpretation and recruitment. San Francisco, in addition to analyzing and developing interpretive and recruitment methods, called attention to the many nuances that exist in an effective community relations and educational program.

One of the results of the various projects was a spectacular rise

<sup>11</sup> Donald Brieland, *An Experimental Study of the Selection of Adoptive Parents at Intake* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1959), p. 112; David Fanshel, "Approaches to Measuring Adjustment in Adoptive Parents," in Dale B. Harris et al., *Quantitative Approaches to Parent Selection* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1962), pp. 18-35; Scott Briar, "Clinical Judgment in Foster Care Placement," *Child Welfare*, XLII (1963), 161-69.

<sup>12</sup> "Adopt-A-Child," New York Project Materials and Progress Report (1955-56; mimeographed), *Adoptive Placement of Minority Group Children in the San Francisco Bay Area: a Study by MARCH* (San Francisco: Minority Adoption Recruitment of Children's Homes, 1959); Rita Dukette and Thelma G. Thompson, *Adoptive Resources for Negro Children* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1959); "Joint Recruitment Project for Minority Adoptive Homes; a Three-Year Program of Community Concern Translated into Cooperative Action, March, 1956-June, 1959" (mimeographed).

in applications for children of minority background, although not so many children were actually placed as the agencies wished.

A fairly extensive discussion has developed around the findings of several psychoanalytically oriented therapists which purport to show that adopted children are more prone to emotional disturbances than other children, that their emotional problems relate directly to adoption, and that this suggests changing agency policy concerned with telling the child of his adoption.<sup>13</sup> The data presented certainly do not support these conclusions. In making comparisons with nonadopted children, the wrong population base is used; no allowance is made for urban residence although clinics are largely situated in cities; no heed is paid to economic status although the adoptive parents described obviously were financially able to seek psychiatric help. No account is taken of the possibility that adoptive parents might have less hesitancy about using psychiatric help than natural parents.

Other therapists, whose samples are larger, find no major differences in the problems or the family circumstances of the adopted and the nonadopted groups. Still others maintain that the problems of adopted children stem from a different aspect of the adoption process than the one indicated by the clinical investigators. What seems to emerge is that the adoptions studied should not have been consummated in the first place. Apparently, these adoptive parents had preexisting conflicts which, once aroused, produced emotional problems in the children.

The findings do not offer a convincing basis for changing the

<sup>13</sup> Lili Peller, "About 'Telling the Child' of His Adoption," *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis*, XL (1961), 145-54, and "Further Comments on Adoption," *ibid.*, XIII (1963), 1-14; Marshall D. Schechter, "Observations on Adopted Children," *A.M.A. Archives of General Psychiatry*, III (1960), 21-32; Dorothy C. Krugman, "Reality in Adoption," *Child Welfare*, XLIII (1964), 349-58; Dolores M. Sweeny, Diann T. Gasbarro, and Martin R. Gluck, "A Descriptive Study of Adopted Children Seen in a Child Guidance Center," *Child Welfare*, XLII (1963), 345-49, 352; Povl W. Toussieng, M.D., "Thoughts Regarding the Etiology of Psychological Difficulties in Adopted Children," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 59-65, 71; Elsie S. Tonesifer, "A Comparative Study of the Behavior Difficulties of Adopted and Own Children Who have Been Treated in a Child Guidance Clinic," unpublished thesis, Smith College, 1962; Rita Dukette, "Discussion of 'Thoughts Regarding the Etiology of Psychological Difficulties in Adopted Children,'" *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 66-71; News from the Field, "Psychiatric Problems among Adopted Children," *Child Welfare*, XLIII (1964), 137-39.



policy, supported by most adoption agencies, of telling the child of his adoption at a relatively early age and as early as possible.

A less extensive discussion has flared up around a theory of adoption, accompanied by suggestions for modifying agency practice, advanced by a sociologist.<sup>14</sup> Competent criticism has pointed out that the supporting data are sketchy and fail to establish external validity. Hence the existence of a biological chauvinism in the community at large, which is a major feature of this theory, has not been proved. It might be added that whatever the attitude of certain individuals, society as a whole has been moving away from a strictly biologically determined concept of parenthood to one based on parental behavior. Witness the sanction of depriving parents of their parental rights when their parental behavior is unacceptable to society. The author's approval of adoptive parents achieving "minority status" by organizing themselves into clubs or associations is also questionable. It would be ridiculous to pretend that adoptive parents are the natural parents, but this does not mean that they do not belong in the larger group. The specific suggestions either exhibit considerable ignorance about what practice is like in the better agencies or are too naïve. For example, can anyone seriously think that meetings between natural and adoptive parents can ever be so "carefully arranged and protected" as to preclude revealing precisely the things that must be kept confidential?

*Changes in agency procedures, requirements, and attitudes.*—The prime movers behind these changes have been the decrease in ratio between white adoptive applicants and children and the still desperate position of the hard-to-place children. In their efforts to recruit potential parents, agencies have been emphasizing "screening in" rather than "screening out" applicants. The position now is that the existence of problems does not automatically mean rejection; rather, agencies are attempting to understand the nature of these problems and determine the extent to which the agency should attempt to deal with them. There has been more emphasis

<sup>14</sup> H. David Kirk, *Shared Fare; a Theory of Adoption and Mental Health* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964). The discussion may be found in: David Fanshel, "An Upsurge of Interest in Adoption," *Children*, XI (1964), 193-96; and Arthur Glickman and David Fanshel in "Readers' Exchange," *Children*, XII (1965), 87-88.



on human and personal qualities and somewhat less on intellectual and financial factors; there is more concern with seeking assurance that the child will be loved, not merely well cared for.

This trend has led to offering more service to applicants who are not ready to adopt but are interested, and to new adoptive parents. Agencies have been moving away from unrealistic eligibility requirements concerning age, length of marriage, own children, residence, nationality, race, religion, infertility, and employment of the mother. There are, however, still differences in philosophy and implementation.

Eager as they are to welcome would-be adopters, agencies are careful to observe objectively their clients' motivation and to make as sure as possible that they have the qualifications to create a truly nurturing home. Hence, the capacity to develop a satisfactory parental relationship with someone else's child continues to be carefully evaluated, and maturity is looked for. No longer are agencies seeking "ideal" homes—a fuzzy concept at best—but neither are they willing to settle for "marginal" homes whose margin is not solidly safe.

Practice has also changed considerably in respect to testing and "matching" of children. Instead of the isolated observation test or appraisal to decide who is "adoptable" and "normal," more reliance is placed on systematic observation and analysis by all those who may have contact with the child—the foster mother, the social worker, the nursing and medical staff, the psychologist, and the psychiatrist. This is not to deny that for infants older than three months a test has specific value for ruling out serious defects.

Matching is not so much looking for similarities in physical characteristics and background *per se* as it is "a process through which there is a focus on the identification of the needs of the individual children and a corresponding study, selection of, and giving of help to families with the capacities to respond to those needs."<sup>15</sup> Children are now placed soon after birth so that they can form an attachment to a pair of close, warm, and central figures who will assure their physical and emotional security.

<sup>15</sup> Dorothy C. Krugman, "The Psychologist in an Adoption Agency," *Child Welfare*, XLIII (1964), 241-45.

Internal procedures have been revised. Genuine efforts have been made to cut down recording, shorten the waiting period, and reduce the time spent in conferences, consultations, and supervision. Ever greater stress is placed on the fundamental importance of a trained and qualified staff prepared to carry responsibility for services to the natural parents, the child, and the adoptive parents, including referral and consultation.

As in other social work agencies, citizen boards, advisory committees, auxiliaries, and other types of volunteer groups have been used in adoption. They have performed important functions, especially in public relations, legislation, fund-raising, and constructive criticism of certain aspects of agency practice. Because of shortages of trained personnel, many adoption agencies have given increasing attention to the possibilities of using volunteers in certain areas of direct service to clients as well. After selecting among volunteers those whose backgrounds were most likely to yield appropriate skills and ability and orienting them through short training courses, agencies have assigned to them a variety of tasks associated with direct service. This kind of volunteer participation can free professional staff to do that which only they can and should undertake. It has been found that optimum use of volunteers in direct service requires a recognition that the volunteer is an essential part of the team, contributing his special skills; that he is fully capable of dealing with confidential material; and that he must be helped to carry out his specific duties through competent and clearly centered supervision.

And now, what of the next ten years? What happens will derive from the past and the present, as this heritage is shaped by many complex forces. It will be a continuation, an evolving sum of the efforts made by the agencies, the communities, allied disciplines and professions.

Past experience and a dispassionate analysis of the societal forces that impinge on adoption invest some prognostications with considerable certainty:

1. *Agency adoption is here to stay.*

This is crystal clear. Neither the sociologists who have stressed the many-faceted differences between adoptive and biological sta-

tus, nor the psychiatrists who have been concerned with the imperfect emotional environment in some adoptive families, nor the myriad writers, journalists, and reporters who have criticized agency performance, have called for the abandonment of agency adoption.

2. *Adoption will not be available for all children who need it.*

This is sad, but true. The relationship between illegitimacy, divorce, and separation, on the one hand, and adoption, on the other, has been established beyond question. For the need for adoptive services to decrease appreciably, there would have to occur a veritable social revolution, including a gigantic growth in preventive welfare measures of all kinds. Such a fundamental and pervasive transformation in the next ten years is not predicted by anyone. It is universally recognized that even the exciting new movement for equality of opportunity will require a long time to reduce the amount of poverty, the proportion of broken homes, and the rate of out-of-wedlock births among our Negro people. Changes in ideas and social practices do not come easily.

Careful estimates foresee 350,000 illegitimate births in 1970,<sup>16</sup> and not only a higher divorce rate, but a rising number of children affected by divorce, because both the proportion of couples with children and the average number of children per divorce have been climbing.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, involuntarily childless couples from twenty-five to forty years of age will be fewer because of improved treatment for infertility and the low birth rate from 1930 to 1940.

If we assume, optimistically, that the number of adoptions will increase in the next ten years at the same rate as in the past decade, the most that can be expected is that adoption will hold its own with the expected increase of children in the population.

3. *Adoption will be neither the only nor the best solution for all neglected and dependent children.*

This would be true even in the best of all possible worlds because the best solution for each individual child demands a net-

<sup>16</sup> Clark E. Vincent, "Illegitimacy in the Next Decade: Trends and Implications," *Child Welfare*, XLIII (1964), 513-20.

<sup>17</sup> *Trends in Divorce and Family Disruption* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1963).

work of diversified child welfare programs. To say this is to voice a platitude. And yet its genuine implementation requires a searching reexamination of some of the strongest convictions and aversions harbored by adoption workers. How sound, for example, is this now univocal position?

Although many unwed mothers have strong feelings of attachment to their babies, their frequent unreadiness for parenthood, intensified by the harsh social realities entailed, makes it inadvisable for most of them to keep their children. In most instances, an unwed mother can ensure a healthier future for her baby through adoption.<sup>18</sup>

The past twenty years have been marked by stability in the proportion of illegitimate children adopted, the range being from 29 percent to 31 percent.<sup>19</sup> The 70 percent who were not adopted have been living with their mothers, relatives, or in foster care.

The field knows next to nothing about those who have remained with their mothers and relatives, but what it does know certainly generates doubt about the position quoted.<sup>20</sup> It has been found, contrary to predictions, that many of these children and mothers are living rather good lives and that many others could live better lives if adequate economic assistance and services were available. Nor are these glimmers into the unmarried mother subculture surprising, for we know that as a group they have little in common except the illegitimacy of their children, and that women from every walk of life, from every intellectual level, and from every social class become unmarried mothers. Is it possible that social workers have been insensitive to an evolving mood which has become less condemnatory to the unmarried-mother family? Is it possible that social workers have invested our society with unwarranted differences from other societies in which unmarried mothers as a rule keep their children? Is it possible, in short, that social

<sup>18</sup> Viola W. Bernard, M.D., *Adoption* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1964), p. 73.

<sup>19</sup> Vincent, *op. cit.*

<sup>20</sup> Helen R. Wright, *80 Unmarried Mothers Who Kept Their Babies* (Sacramento, Calif.: State of California, Department of Social Welfare, Children's Home Society of California, Los Angeles County Bureau of Adoptions, 1965); *Hard to Place Children*, Part 2 (Kansas City, Mo.: Community Studies, Inc., 1956).

workers have been operating in relation to a presumed rather than a demonstrated need?

That further research is badly needed is undeniable; that such research may point up the desirability of offering *family* services to unmarried mothers rather than seeking unattainable adoptive homes is quite possible.

The field does know a great deal about what happens to illegitimate children in long-term foster care.<sup>21</sup> That many of them are not leading good lives, is unfortunately true; that the reaction to this has led many social workers to view foster care as a last resort is understandable. And yet it is equally true that certain foster homes and certain institutions have provided excellent care for certain children—the care they needed. There is no proof that, intrinsically, foster care cannot be the best solution to the problems of some children. There is ample proof that a more imaginative approach and bolder experimentation are long overdue in order to activate realistic, tested standards and to invent more constructive group environments. Again, we may be overlooking the positive experience of some countries in which institutional care and permanent foster homes are the preferred solutions.

4. *Adoption will become more closely associated with the total complex of child welfare programs.*

There is proof abundant that these programs are interdependent, both quantitatively and qualitatively, just as all of them together and the society which sponsors them are interdependent. This means that isolation and chauvinism are “out”; and that co-ordination, planning, and realistic appraisal of the rightful role that each should play are “in.” Hence, even if at times adoption seems more glamorous than other programs, it is essential to help each of these others make its full contribution. In the future, perhaps more than in the past, social work will maintain its traditional firmness against being diverted from a genuinely democratic approach by pressures from socially and economically privileged groups. Resources will be used with true objectivity so

<sup>21</sup> Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, Jr., *Children in Need of Parents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).



that progress may go forward in all sectors at a faster and more even pace.

5. *Adoption will continue to work in close association with allied disciplines and professions.*

This association, beneficial in the past, will yield even richer rewards in the future as the participants become more knowledgeable about each other. Psychologists and psychiatrists will continue to apply mental health concepts dealing with child development and behavior throughout the entirety of basic adoptive procedures. Physicians will continue to provide information about the birth history and subsequent development of the child, as well as pertinent medical data concerning the natural and adoptive parents. Lawyers will give valuable help in modifying and/or implementing the many laws<sup>22</sup> that affect adoption. The geneticists' special contribution will center on determining hereditary factors which may affect potentialities for development. From sociologists and anthropologists social workers will continue to learn about the subcultures of the client groups, and about how their own professional subculture differs from that of other professions and from the larger society that includes policy-makers, taxpayers, and donors.

Adoption agencies must realize that they constitute the magnetic hub around which the whole adoption process revolves; they are *not* a segment of a process which revolves around some other hub. It is the agency that sees adoption in its totality and understands better than anyone else the meaning of what happens to everyone involved in the undertaking. This in no way minimizes the contribution of allied professions and disciplines. On the contrary, it gives to each the opportunity to define and carry out the particular function for which it is best qualified.

6. *Independent adoptions will continue to decline in proportion to the total number of children adopted by nonrelatives.*

The trend in this direction has already been noted. To en-

<sup>22</sup> These laws are concerned with: (1) licensing of child-placing agencies, foster homes, and maternity care facilities; (2) regulating who can place a child for adoption; (3) regulating relinquishment and consent to adopt; (4) providing for voluntary and involuntary termination of parental rights; (5) affecting the marital status of parents.



courage it, legislation should prohibit the courts from entering a decree of adoption for any child not related to the petitioners unless the placement was made by a licensed child welfare agency. Halfway measures, such as eliminating a third party from arranging placements but allowing the natural mother to do so, requiring a social investigation after the child has been placed, or making a rapid preplacement investigation, cannot give adequate protection. Nor do they reflect the growing conviction that society rather than the parents is the final arbiter of the child's welfare.

The issue of independent placements has been controversial for many years. There are some who argue that it cannot be proved that children thrive better in a home selected by an agency than in one chosen by private parties. A recent study of independent adoptions<sup>23</sup> furnishes facts about the quality of home life experienced by children in nonagency adoptions and the extent to which this leaves much to be desired. Equally authoritative, statistically significant, and recent studies of agency adoptions are not yet available.<sup>24</sup> They must be undertaken and they must include evaluations of agency adoptions consummated at the present level of professional practice, as well as long-term follow-ups entailing periodic evaluations. The latter are important because certain problems seen at one stage of a child's development may be subsequently resolved, whereas serious difficulties may only arise or become apparent at later phases.

The requirement of agency placement does not deny that there are risks inherent in every adoption, or claim that agencies have developed foolproof methods for predicting the outcome of a particular adoption; it does assert that such placements lessen the risks and provide opportunity for regulation. Agencies have succeeded, more than any individual lawyer or physician, in offering maximum protection of the identity of both the natural parents and the adoptive parents; in assuring that the child is legally separated

<sup>23</sup> Witmer, *et al.*, *op. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> Four follow-up studies have been completed: Amatruda and Baldwin, *op. cit.*; Brenner, *op. cit.*; Fairweather, *op. cit.*; Esther B. Nordlie and Sheldon C. Reed, "Follow-up on Adoption Counseling for Children of Possible Racial Admixture," *Child Welfare*, XLI (1962), 297-304, 327. Only the last of these may be considered recent, however, and it studies only forty children.

from his natural parents so that placement will be secure and stable; in giving adoptive parents security and guidance for the future through a careful appraisal of the child to be placed and care of the child prior to placement; and in providing maximum protection for the child by selecting a suitable home for him. It is only through agencies that older, handicapped, and minority group children have found adoptive parents. These accomplishments more than make up for the inevitable failures and more than justify the community's decision to entrust agencies with this work instead of permitting a diffusion of efforts.

*Continuing Problems.*—Unevenness, characteristic of the practice and outlook of adoption agencies in the last decade, will still have to be dealt with in the next, keeping in mind that differences may be related to local sources of adoptive children, local activities of independent practitioners, attitudes and expectations of local applicants and of staff, variations in law and in the willingness of the community to support agency endeavors.

That complete sameness is undesirable in a society as heterogeneous as ours is widely recognized. What is not so extensively discerned is that unanimity concerning goals in no way rules out creative flexibility in the ways in which these goals may be achieved. It is the continuing lack of conviction and confusion about goals that brings about an opportunistic flexibility that is often a cover-up for inadequacy and frustration.

The Child Welfare League's *Standards for Adoption Service* (1958) is truly impressive as the formulation of the best thinking and knowledge then available; periodically reviewed, it will continue to represent the best thinking and knowledge. The goals that should be unanimous in the field of adoption and the desirable practices that are likely to achieve these goals are clearly enunciated here. Creative flexibility is stimulated and encouraged. The many ways in which agencies can be helped to use *Standards* to the full need to be intensified and to be brought closer to the workers who do the job.

Many of the gaps in knowledge that hampered adoption in the past still remain, although current research is likely to produce meaningful knowledge at a stepped-up tempo. Moreover, there is

a more genuine recognition by practitioners that research is an important contributor to the body of knowledge that constitutes the professional base of practice. In some instances, research confirms familiar points of view; often it presents information in a modified or novel context which helps to generalize to new situations; occasionally it uncovers information which was altogether unanticipated. Always, research exposes unprofitable and implausible ways of thinking and doing which should not have the support of responsible professionals.

Some of the numerous aspects of the adoption process that need further exploration have already been indicated; a host of others emerge from various sources.<sup>25</sup> Many practitioners expect research to answer value questions, to provide answers which are unambiguous in their implication and global in their applicability. They do not appreciate the fact that research does not provide such answers; hence, measured by the yardstick of practical requirements, research is lacking. Many researchers are frustrated by practitioners who, they claim, fail to produce concepts derived from a broad, theoretical framework, fail to formulate research questions that go to the heart of a given problem, fail to identify the significant variables, fail to keep the kind of records that lend themselves to investigation.

Four suggestions seem important:

1. Even now, national agencies play a leading role in coordinating local agency studies so that they are cumulative rather than fragmentary, and in developing methodology for tackling questions of common concern. This role should be broadened to include the setting of priorities, and strengthened to result in a conscious and continuing direction. This would preclude mountains of "findings" that are shoddy, meaningless, and useless. Our

<sup>25</sup> Among these are: dynamics of childlessness; motivations behind the wish to adopt; significance of adoption to both parent and child; comparative studies with nonadopted children, other adopted children, and children living in some sort of incomplete family unit; studies to find out whether adoptive parents have more problems than other parents and, if so, in what areas and why; what contrasts may be discerned over the years among persons who know of their adoptive status in the beginning, those who learned of it late, and those who learned of it traumatically; what changes occur in the expectations of adoptive applicants as they proceed to build their adoptive homes.

society is not so affluent as to permit this sort of thing. Intelligent and impartial direction would lessen frustration on all sides, would be more successful in securing adequate financing and thus ensuring the best quality of research, would promote creativity, and would bolster confidence in what is produced. Americans have a great deal to learn from less affluent countries that make up for the paucity of research by superb coordination and planning.

2. Over-all direction of research activity must include practitioners at every step. Only then will practice stimulate research, open sources of data, clarify concepts, and test and check conclusions. Only then will research not simply raise new questions that need further research, but will also suggest recommendations for action. Common sense is also indispensable in deciding which experts to believe.

3. Many gaps in knowledge cannot be filled without investigations carried out by related disciplines and professions. Social work must participate whenever appropriate. It must distill from them that which is useful for practice, but in so doing, avoid the tendency to read more into findings from other fields than is warranted.

4. Just as much effort must be devoted to helping agencies use research findings as is devoted to research itself. It simply is not enough to produce findings. The lamentable chauvinism and waste in some fields emerge vividly when the molehill of accomplishment is compared to the mountain of perfectly good knowledge that has been lost in the scramble. Again, we have much to learn from countries in which accomplishment is on a level with ours even though the amount of research is nowhere near ours.

The lack of services to hard-to-place children, abysmal in the last decade, remains pronounced. Of the estimated three million illegitimate children under eighteen years of age in the United States in December of 1961, 31 percent, as we have noted, had been adopted. The proportions are strikingly different by race, however: 70 percent of white and only 5 percent of the nonwhite illegitimate children under eighteen were adopted.<sup>26</sup> The assumption that a smaller proportion of nonwhite than of white

<sup>26</sup> Vincent, *op. cit.*

illegitimate children needs adoption has not been researched; even if true, it would not justify the enormous difference between 5 percent and 70 percent.

The trend toward an increased rate of nonwhite children in nonrelative adoptions began several years ago. To accelerate it, agencies need to apply in a more consistent and sustained manner the knowledge that is already at hand. Demonstration projects gave the major answers about what needs to be done, how best to do it, and what the deterrents and obstacles are. The mounting of additional projects at this time is not indicated since they are not likely to enrich current knowledge substantially, are costly, and consume a great deal of professional time and community energy.

Nor do agencies need to seek a definitive answer to the question of whether there really is less interest in adoption among Negroes than among whites. The conclusion of the one study that deals with this question, that there is a "crashing lack of interest," does not square with pertinent statistical data.<sup>27</sup> These data show that the dearth of Negro applicants is more correctly explained by the smaller proportion of two-parent families among Negroes and the low income levels than by different attitudes toward adoption.

In many instances, agencies have been successful in finding homes for difficult-to-place children. To do better, they will need to utilize the findings of research that is now under way, as well as increase the number of adoptive parents in general.

The *religious question* remains a difficult one in adoption. There are members of some faiths who believe that the best welfare of the child requires that the religion of his parents be maintained for him and that this should be the paramount consideration even if it can only be achieved through permanent foster care rather than adoptive placement. Many agencies and individuals hold to the same conviction, except in unusual situations where this policy would be to the child's disadvantage. They believe that the child's need for a good, permanent family of his own should

<sup>27</sup> Deasy and Quinn, *op. cit.* A criticism of its conclusions is contained in Elizabeth Herzog and Rose Bernstein, "Why So Few Negro Adoptions?" *Children*, XII (1965), 14-18.



take precedence over matching the religious background, if such matching would involve excessive delay in placement, or an undesirable placement.<sup>28</sup> In view of the newer thinking in the Roman Catholic Church, as demonstrated in the ecumenical movement, it is perhaps time to submit the religious question to reexamination by all groups.

Evidence indicates that there are more qualified potential adoptive families than the agencies are seeing. This is so not only because many people have an erroneous conception of agency requirements, but also because often agencies have not discarded requirements which are nonessential to successful parenthood. It is not easy to draw the fine line that separates the essential from the nonessential. The goal is to attract all who can become good parents with reasonable help, and at the same time discourage those who cannot become such parents no matter how extensive the help.

Everyone knows that it is best for every child to have two parents. His relationships with them affect different areas of his personality organization at different stages of his development. Each parent is of primary importance for his future adjustment, as is the quality of their marital relationship. To say all this, however, is not synonymous with saying that one parent alone cannot bring up a child successfully. In our own country, there are many fine one-parent families. In the Soviet Union, where the loss of men in the war excluded marriage for millions of women, and at the same time increased tremendously the number of homeless children, many of these children have been brought up by single women unrelated to them. Perhaps single women as adoptive parents could offer new hope in this country for hard-to-place children for whom two-parent families cannot be found.

There is need to be bolder in other directions. Some prospective adoptive couples must be provided with financial support for the child and with counseling during a trial period as parents. Those with children of their own must be encouraged to adopt, as some agencies have been doing for a number of years.

<sup>28</sup> *Standards for Adoption Service* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1958), p. 25.



Ten years ago, the suggestion was made that state adoption resource exchanges be established, leading to a national exchange when the majority of states have their own. In spite of the eminent soundness of this idea, by 1962 only fourteen states had given thought to it. Perhaps the time is ripe to put this idea into operation from the top by securing funds for the establishment of a national exchange. To spur agencies to use it, they should be paid for every family whom they register with the exchange, that is, an approved family for whom they do not have a child.

Expansion of services has also been viewed by agencies in terms of extending additional services to those natural and adoptive parents who are already their clients. Postrelinquishment services to natural mothers are more frequent since it is realized that many have been deprived of affection and security in their family relationships and need help in sorting out their values and feelings as well as in dealing with the practical affairs of life. In relation to adoptive parents, the more numerous offers of postplacement group meetings, postlegal adoption group meetings, and counseling after adoption reflect the recognition that adoptive parenthood, like natural parenthood, is a process of relationships and adjustments that is neverending.

Public relations, the most effective means of interpreting community needs and agency services, remains one of the most controversial areas in adoption. Some agencies continue to fear publicity; others use inappropriate techniques; still others think of publicity as "cheap" and not suitable for such a serious endeavor as adoption. Successful programs have shown that the initial essential step is clarification of goals so that the use of professional skills in public relations can be consistently and insistently related to them. To the end that upsurge in demand for service will be accompanied by an increase in resources, community needs and interests must be emphasized throughout. Furthermore, public relations should be an integral part of administration rather than an extra chore for a tired staff.

A perennial problem that is likely to become intensified as social welfare programs set in motion by the Administration unfold and old ones are spruced up and expanded is that of staffing our agen-

cies. In the next decade, as in the past, there will not be enough trained social workers to fill the jobs. In the face of this fact, only three ideas seem to have any practical value. One is that more effort and imagination should go into obtaining and developing qualified volunteer participation. The second is that positions in adoption agencies should be carefully scrutinized to determine whether they contain any components that can be performed by intelligent human beings who are not fully trained social workers, and if so, what these components are. The third is that the training of social workers should be improved so that they do more effectively the work that nobody else can do.

In relation to the second, it needs pointing out that we have been underestimating both the willingness and the ability of our young people to do worthwhile things and to do them well. Elsewhere in the world, youth is given immeasurably heavier responsibility and seems to thrive on it, to the general betterment of society.

In relation to the third, it must be realized that undergraduate departments and professional schools must learn to what extent the education they offer meets the demands of improved practice, or fails to meet them. For example, does training endow our workers to speak forthrightly of their convictions and to challenge community patterns and structures if they do not benefit children? Does it qualify them to work harmoniously and fruitfully with allied disciplines and professions, including the public relations profession? Does it help them internalize knowledge and attitudes so that they become skills? Does it imbue them with an appreciation of the value of research? Does it nurture their ability to face the possibility of failure, as well as their certainty that past and present failures need not mark the limits of human power? In short, does it bestow on them style? Yes, style. If it does, then agencies ought to make it possible for them to work at their top level without wasting time in oversupervision and inconsequential tasks that can be done by others. Poor administration can be just as harmful as poor diagnostic thinking. Streamlining administration is a science, but basically it means deciding what problems the

agency will address itself to, what services are involved, and what is necessary in order to provide these services.

*Emerging problem areas.*—In the past few years, much thought has been given to the question of termination of parental rights, influenced by a changing concept of the family as a unit based on ties of affection and actual performance of the parental role. More firmness is being advocated toward the legal separation of children from biological parents who are incapable of fulfilling the parental role. In relation to adoption, this philosophy is expressed in the suggested requirement that, in a nonrelative adoption, judicial proceedings to terminate the rights of the natural parents must antedate the petition for adoption. Separate termination and adoption proceedings would lessen the opportunity for confusion about the availability of a particular child and the suitability of a particular adoptive home. The confusion of the child's status between the natural parent's relinquishment or release and the time of placement, or the judicial decree of adoption, must be greatly diminished.

Others believe that the rights of all concerned can be assured by an agency, if properly supervised by the state, through which individual transfers can take place without court supervision. The factor of confidentiality between an unmarried parent and the agency, overcoming her natural reluctance to take part in any public court proceeding, enables agencies to function better, and should encourage such a parent to work with an authorized agency rather than make independent arrangements that require court proceedings to terminate the parental tie.

All agree that for the protection and welfare of the natural parent, the child, and the adoptive parents, there must be a definite, an unequivocal, and an ascertainable point at which a surrender becomes permanent. Since such permanence is less likely to result from relinquishment, it is probably advisable to press for a judicial termination of parental rights before the petition of adoption.

There is some evidence that many unmarried fathers would benefit from guidance and counseling. It is pointed out that their problems and responsibilities, aside from support payments, have

been relatively neglected in efforts to deal with the more urgent problems of the unmarried mother and her child. Many such fathers find it difficult to ask for the help they need.

This is undoubtedly true, but the same thing could be said about any group in the population. Rather than seeking out the unmarried father as a matter of policy, the matter ought to be approached from a casework basis. If, for example, more precise information about the heredity of the child is of prime importance, and if such information demands that the father be seen, then every effort should be made to locate him; the same is true if the mother wishes it out of constructive motives; or if the father's participation is a decisive factor in deciding whether the mother should or should not keep the child.

Today we find ourselves borne swiftly forward by fantastic scientific progress to the unlimited vistas of a future world. In the social domain, mankind has been less inventive. Rather, we have concentrated on strengthening the social institutions that have come down from the dawn of human history and adapting them to the current scene. It is quite appropriate, therefore, that we should pause once more to look at adoption—an old and honored institution that captures our imagination, just as it did the imagination of the ancient Babylonians.

# *Casework below the Poverty Line*

by CAROL H. MEYER

IN DISCUSSING CASEWORK below the poverty line, I speak with the conviction that, as an individualizing process, casework is, according to all its definitions, geared to the client's own life style and thus is as appropriate below as above the poverty line. I do not perceive it as a panacea nor as an alternative to other efforts, but rather as a necessary and effective part of a network of services attempting to deal with poverty and its results upon individuals.

No form of social work can be viewed as a substitute for meeting the primary needs of people. The solution to economic need is money; the answer to unemployment is jobs; the prescription for slum living is good housing; the cure for illiteracy is education. That is where we must begin. The role of social caseworkers in the battle against class and racial discrimination is surely not a methodological one. Fortunately, caseworkers also carry out other roles: as aware, active, and angry citizens, for example; as members of many communities, including the professional community, where people join together in the struggle for civil rights, civil liberties, and a fairer distribution of the income of this country.

If social workers suggest to the community at large, or delude themselves, that they can change the economic structure through public welfare services, that they can cure delinquency through court and probation services, that they can eradicate discrimination through any community service, or that they can seriously arrest family disorganization through family and child welfare services, then they will be committing a disservice to the people with whom they work, to the taxpayer, to the board member, and to themselves. For there is no conception of social work that can claim to cure social and economic disorganization.

There is a well-established role and function for social work that is not only palliative and rehabilitative. More and more, social workers are reaching back to the causes of social problems, and they are concerning themselves with policy matters that will sooner or later have a far-reaching effect upon our social and economic life as well as upon the established modes of intervention. Caseworkers are finding that unless they concern themselves with these matters their therapeutic and rehabilitative efforts will indeed be decreasingly effective in the light of the increases in individual maladjustment and the rapidly developing public recognition of social and economic breakdown that is making excessive demands upon the small supply of caseworkers.

Finally, the individualizing function of social casework is no cause for embarrassment. In a generation when machines have taken over human tasks, when teaching by television, digit dialing, and computerized responses to human need are all upon us, it is refreshing that social caseworkers still attempt to reach people family by family, child by child, and patient by patient. People react in individual ways to economic and social breakdown; much as they may be counted, grouped, classified, and programmed for, all of society's efforts and failures come down to affecting individuals after all. The solution to the problem of quantitative limitations is not no casework, but more caseworkers, and an army of social welfare technicians who will complement the casework services and spread these needed services among larger groups of the population.

The condition of poverty has become so popularized in government and private circles, in the press and in universities, that it is difficult to grasp it in an organized way.

Let us arbitrarily rule out of our definition any "clinical" considerations that view the poor as chronically dependent, as multiproblem families, as character-disordered people, or whatever is currently thought to explain the behavior of people in poverty. Let us affirm that the primary characteristic of poor people is that they are without money and consequently suffer from physical deprivation as well as from social and cultural maladjust-



ments. Keyserling's "seven marks of poverty"<sup>1</sup> are useful in describing these people. As "root and offshoot," a fifth of our people suffer from inadequate schooling, deficient health services, crime and juvenile delinquency, inadequate social security and welfare programs, indecent housing conditions, discrimination, and high unemployment.

The "culture of poverty" is often mentioned as the chief obstacle to social caseworkers' being able to reach the poor. The clinical descriptions of the poor seem to have been derived from that which caseworkers know best, out of their efforts to understand and to reach the poor. It must be granted that clinical definitions are useful in individual cases, but it has not been proved that they are totally accurate in generalizing about the poor. It might be questioned, as well, that sociological constructs have been sufficiently dependable to give specific direction to casework practice.

Herzog makes a telling point in questioning the existence of a real culture of poverty in view of the absence of a common identity, arts and artifacts, or of a distinctive technology:

. . . the life-ways of the slum dwellers represent, not a system of culturally evolved patterns, but rather a series of disjointed pragmatic adjustments to exigencies perceived as unpredictable and uncontrollable.<sup>2</sup>

Riessman comments upon the fact that the extended family life of poor Negro families is not so much a cultural prerequisite as a response to the historical and economic factors which have threatened the economic security of the Negro male, forcing him out of the household. As a result of the effort at "coping with an essentially negative environment . . . a new family pattern evolved to meet this environmental threat."<sup>3</sup>

Recent materials suggest that the barriers surrounding the poor are not so much cultural, and therefore alien to social casework

<sup>1</sup> Leon H. Keyserling, "Progress or Poverty," Conference on Economic Progress, 1964, pp. 10-12.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Herzog, "Some Assumptions about the Poor," *Social Service Review*, XXXIX (1963), 394.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Riessman, "Low-Income Culture: the Strengths of the Poor," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, XXVI (1964), 418.

methods that derive from other cultural commitments, as primarily economic. True, subcultures exist among the poor as they do in any group, and paths of communication must be established between representatives of various groups—caseworkers and their clients, for example—before any help can be forthcoming. But it is salutary that we are now arriving at the sensible view that the poor share with us the same passions and concerns which, were it not for economic and social impoverishment, might very well be translated into similar goals and styles of life. In other words, we need not be anthropologists in order to practice social casework; the poor are not a defined group with particular, obscure characteristics. They are like each of us in our likeness and uniqueness, except that they have suffered greater deprivation and have developed particular responses to deal with this major fact of their lives.

Cultural studies of poor or lower-class families are often based upon observation and interview, and when the findings appear in print, there is a tendency to overgeneralize beyond the limitations of the study itself. Is the common notion that the poor do not have middle-class aspirations really valid? When there are opportunities for economically deprived young people to attend college, do they not take advantage of them? When AFDC mothers are given a chance to be foster mothers, do they not seek improvement in their living standards? For every cultural generalization the practitioner can provide an exception. There are variations among the poor just as among the middle class, and enlightening as partialized research may be, it is essential that we evaluate the differences between inherent cultural commitments and group or individual responses to circumstances which, if changed, would change the responses.

If there is not a true culture of poverty whom are we addressing as the "poor" when we contemplate the usefulness or validity of social casework practice? There are shifting definitions of poverty, and it is important that an accurate profile be acknowledged, much as Orshansky attempts to outline.<sup>4</sup> As she notes the varied causes and solutions to poverty, she describes four groups that are

<sup>4</sup> Mollie Orshansky, "Counting the Poor: Another Look at the Poverty Profile," *Social Security Bulletin*, XXVIII (1965), 3-29.

particularly vulnerable to poverty: mothers who are bringing up children without a father; the aged or disabled person who cannot earn; the Negro who is not allowed to earn; and the large families of employed white men. When the concept of poverty is thus translated into identifiable groups of people, we can begin to consider their differential characteristics and the differential role of social casework with each group.

If we now examine some characteristics of social casework we will be better able to stress the interactional components of each.

Bertha Reynolds describes social casework as having

evolved out of a growing awareness of the necessity of treating individuals as unique in their differences from each other, rather than treating alike all instances of trouble of a certain sort.<sup>5</sup>

As an individualizing service to people, Cannon said, "the objective in a social case is not to arrive at a static or 'right' conclusion, but to arrive at a condition in which tensions may be balanced or relaxed and desires satisfied or redirected."<sup>6</sup> This objective is applicable in cross-cultural, ethnic, racial, and economic terms. It is not concerned with absolute norms or middle-class values, right or wrong or good or bad. When the process is utilized appropriately, when person-in-situation is the focus, case solutions grow out of case conditions and human resources evaluated within the framework of a social reality. And these are always different, case by case.

In these terms there is no contradiction evident in caseworkers working with the poor. The limitations perceived in social casework seem to have derived more from the uses to which it has been put. Characteristically, social casework has drawn from a variety of models of practice that have always reflected the sociopolitical age in which they were developed. Historically, it is possible to identify at least five models.

First was the *social survey*, or "old" sociological mode, wherein the client was studied, provided for, and given to, or was seen as

<sup>5</sup> Bertha C. Reynolds, "Re-thinking Social Casework," *Social Service Digest*, (1938), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Antoinette Cannon, "Guiding Motives in Social Work," in Cora Kasius, ed., *New Directions in Social Work* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 18.

acting upon his own situation while caseworkers waited for him to do his own changing; he was an *object* of social casework. It would be as fallacious to identify social casework in the 1960s in these 1916 terms as it would be to evaluate modern medicine in terms of the archaic practice of bloodletting.

Second was the *educational* approach, or the more recent conceptualization of the problem-solving mode, where caseworkers provided for clients all of the then-conceived-of opportunities for change or modification of behavior and situation. Whether the technical emphasis was upon relationship, support, advice, relief, or other services, change was to come about through the strengthening of the client by casework actions, so that he would be more capable of dealing with his life. The singular limitation in this mode was that it remained a voluntary process, so that the client himself had to be highly motivated to invest himself in the process of change, even when the caseworker made therapeutic opportunities available to him. The focus was, essentially, on the *person*, because while the casework has historically been concerned with environment, not until recently have there been concepts that described environment so that more than lip service could be devoted to this aspect of the person's life.

Third was the *clinical*, or medical, model where the focus was on pathology and maladjustment, and the caseworker's preoccupation was with the cure and personality change. While there was nothing intrinsically dysfunctional about this emphasis, it was, of course, almost totally concerned with the effects of intrapsychic malady. It required a pathological condition that was reparable; therefore, it dealt primarily with individual psychic disturbance and behavioral maladjustment. It did not, furthermore, address itself to social change, prevention of problems, or spheres of normal life, because it was geared to clinically observable problems, where the unit of attention was molded to suit the available techniques.

Fourth, social caseworkers recently have made occasional brief forays into *political* modes of practice, where the client has been pressed into service on his own behalf and has been expected to change his own condition through social action, lobbying, striking;

or exerting pressure upon power groups. This mode has avoided recognition of individual needs and pathology in its emphasis upon social change to be effected by, as well as for, the client groups.

The fifth model of practice is very new in our social work history, although it is rather traditional in medicine. It has been due partially to the introduction of social service concepts that social casework can now address itself to this new mode, the *public health* model of practice. Here it is understood that the client cannot by himself change himself, and there is complete recognition of the societal and epidemiological forces that contribute to his life style as well as to his problems. The focus of public health medicine is upon prevention, and where disease occurs, upon total coverage that utilizes the best of the available clinical skills. This approach implies active intervention by the social caseworker, combined with full responsibility for the psychosocial health of a community, education for health, and the finest of clinical practice when treatment is required. The broad and flexible spectrum of services in public health programs would provide in social casework for the varied emphases and interests that caseworkers have expressed in fragmentary ways since 1916.

Social caseworkers pursue one or more of the several modes of practice we have mentioned, each of them somewhat useful in particular situations. One of the great values of the casework method is that it has remained an open system, receptive to new knowledge and emphases. What has been lacking is a framework within which each part may be viewed in its connection with the others.

There are essential differences between 1916 and 1965 practice that reflect changes in American political, social, and economic trends and objectives. For example, we are emerging from the shadow of social Darwinism; hence we can now expect that, given certain conditions, change in people and society can occur. As a nation we are recognizing that a *laissez-faire*, unregulated society must inevitably create poverty. Moreover, the popular swell of the civil rights movement has promoted the idea that the poor must be included in the fabric of society, and that people do not adjust well to poverty even if they are kept happy. It has become ap-



parent everywhere that unless poverty is eradicated, its results will continue to enter the mainstream of our economic life, and discrimination, unemployment, bad housing, delinquency, and family breakdown will affect all citizens in every social and economic group.

Social casework has redefined its perimeters in keeping with this changing philosophy; changing theoretical formulations indicate changes of perception on the part of caseworkers themselves. The casework literature no longer is preoccupied with intrapsychic reorganization or resolution of conflict—goals that could not be achieved and, even if attempted, could only be applied to a very few clients who had the luxury of being without severe reality problems. Social casework has been subject to various forces and influences which have resulted in some absurdities and distortions. Other methods are no more immune to these forces and influences—and certainly no less vulnerable to error.

Nevertheless, social caseworkers historically have indeed worked continually with poor people. In public and voluntary social agencies, in hospitals and clinics, in courts and institutions—wherever all classes of people have sought help with problems of living, social casework has been the core of the helping program, whether therapeutic, rehabilitative, restorative, or merely friendly. Now that poverty has belatedly become officially recognized as the “root and offshoot” of so many interrelated social problems, the profession and the public are demanding that caseworkers commit themselves to working with the poor. Is it known how many people below the poverty line caseworkers have worked with in the past and are working with today?

In view of the possibility that accurate definitions of poverty and of casework would indicate a clear role for caseworkers to practice effectively below the poverty line, what obstacles remain? Since poor people are individuals who search in their culture and class for identity and modes of behavior just as other people do, and since they have psychological and physiological structures in common with all others, why is it suggested that casework—an individualizing process—cannot be helpful?

The difficulty, it seems to me, stems from confusion or conflict



in certain value commitments held by caseworkers rather than from deficient methodology. It is not that casework techniques are not useful in alleviating problems of adaptation or rehabilitation, but rather that these techniques are either withheld from the poor or are connected with suitable treatment goals. Methodologically, casework is based upon concepts related to the person in his situation. This notion surely is applicable to a person living in poverty; there is nothing middle-class about that concept. Also, a casework concern has always been to "start where the client is," a principle which provides for cultural as well as psychological and intellectual variation among clients. There is no middle-class language prerequisite accompanying the use of this principle. Finally, casework treatment is defined throughout the literature on varied levels which are directed to social as well as psychological concerns of people. There is no commitment here to middle-class society or psychological attributes; on the contrary, the very individualizing component that characterizes the practice of casework would indicate that each person's psychosocial situation is unique to him and must be addressed individually, case by case.

The force for change lies not only within the client himself, but in the coming together of inner and outer forces expressed through their interaction as a unified whole. Modern casework method is characterized by techniques addressed to strengthening ego capacity, evoking coping mechanisms, and building self-esteem, while at the same time providing opportunities for achievement and fulfillment and pathways of interaction between the person and his milieu. When this individualizing method is placed alongside other methods which seek to do other things, and when it is perceived as being a part of a network of services within a program of social and economic change, there may be less necessity to blame casework for social failures or to expect it to carry alone the burden of social change.

It is not the underlying concepts and principles but rather their adaptation in casework methodology that is at the root of the trouble. It is necessary, also, to search in value areas for the causes of the obvious deficiencies. These are the areas of choice, where caseworkers must elect to redefine their practice so as to accommodate

to the knowledge of absolute interdependence of social and psychic determinants. Here, at least four serious criticisms must be raised about caseworkers when they choose either to avoid working with poor people or to apply maladaptive techniques to their clientele.

1. Some caseworkers still believe that a change in the person will change his social conditions. This is converse to the notion that the person is responsible for his social condition. Adherence to this idea can only promote the fallacious conclusion that casework can, through work with individuals, ameliorate social problems—which it cannot do—and that the poor must be blamed for their own plight.

2. Some caseworkers deliberately avoid working with poor people by associating themselves with private agencies that rule out poor clients through their eligibility requirements. Within every profession there are those who prefer to specialize in the most minute and refined aspect of the work to be done, and thus many caseworkers choose to work in “laboratory” conditions. Then too, other caseworkers do not like the sight and sound and smell and touch of the poor because their own senses are affronted, their consciences are remote, and they do not wish to become involved.

3. Some caseworkers sustain a commitment to absolute norms of behavior that are indeed middle-class. This is a value commitment, not a necessary component of casework method. It is expressed by insistence upon client motivation for help, preoccupation with verbalization of problems and feelings, and interest in a “neat” psychic conflict that can be dealt with in the office rather than in the streets. Perhaps one explanation for this is that as soon as one does reach out into the community one must confront the obstinacy of our social institutions.

4. In light of the interdependence of agency services and the need for collaboration, it is essential that we support the services of each part of the total network in order that our work be effective. Sometimes, not enough responsibility is taken for protection of clients’ rights. Lack of involvement with public services may range from outright carping criticism to pressure for narrow pro-

fessionalization and certification which will further push public agency personnel out of the mainstream of social work.

It is hard to know the derivation of these values. Is it laziness or fear that impels some caseworkers to cling to their desks? Is the narrow view of casework so often held by some practitioners a reflection of their own self-preoccupation? Or is it a manifestation of our depersonalized society? Is its source in the middle-class group from which caseworkers are drawn? Or is it that lower-class clients are indeed hard to work with and demanding of time and strength?

Beyond these concerns of value choices there are issues that require investigation, debate, and expanding knowledge and skill. For example, the scope of intervention of casework services is variously interpreted. Work needs to be done to determine how far back in the preventive sphere casework method can reach effectively. Experimentation is needed to demonstrate the role of casework as a bridge between the person and the program, the client and the service. What will be the role of casework in a planned network of related services? Casework literature, teaching, and practice are currently immersed in understanding ego psychology and techniques directed toward development of people's coping capacities. This is probably one of the most fruitful areas of knowledge to be pursued in the practice of casework below the poverty line. The time has already passed when the major goal of casework treatment is viewed as personality change. We are at last in a surging period when caseworkers, recognizing that behavior is a function of the person, are directing their treatment to the individual within an interactional and transactional framework. Individualizing the person no longer means what it once did: the unit of attention has expanded so that it now includes the person, his significant relationships, and his milieu. There is no dichotomy of inner or outer or of person or society. Changing knowledge of integrative processes can be built into the fluid conceptions of casework method. An illustration of the sensitivity of casework to new knowledge may be seen in its responsiveness to new modes of treatment, such as crisis and milieu therapy.

Let us return briefly to Orshansky's profile of the poor and con-

sider the ways in which modern casework might be helpful as part of a total network of services. Let us also recall the four groups that were defined as most vulnerable to poverty.

For mothers who are bringing up children without a father, the network of services would need to include money income, adequate housing, medical care, proper education, day care, and recreational services. These would be a beginning. What then? Casework might help a particular mother manage the special strains of dealing alone with family matters that are usually easier to handle when a husband and father is present. Moreover, when a mother in these circumstances often must rely upon public assistance and fragmented clinical services, in the absence of adequate social and health insurances, casework might be helpful in informing her about, and strengthening her ability to deal with, the complex social and medical agencies. Although we are talking about psychologically normal mothers and children whose difficulties would tax the strongest personality, those whose ego functioning has broken down and who present pathological behavior would, of course, not be excluded from the caseworker's service.

The aged and disabled would require the same basic services. In individual cases, particularly because of this group's physical and adjustment problems, it is often necessary to help structure pathways of relationships between the aged or disabled person and his family or other social groups in the community. Moreover, the conditions under which these individuals must live, due to impairment of their physical or social functioning, usually make it necessary to consider alternative living arrangements, with decisions based upon a variety of individual factors that lend themselves readily to casework assessment. Again, we are talking about conditions that normally accompany age and disability. In this group too there might be people with more serious problems who would require further ego-building casework services.

The Negro who is not allowed to earn will require the same basic services that are essential for the other two groups, plus a vital casework ingredient—help in finding his way to and within the particular job opportunity that might be made available to him and, concomitantly, support in sustaining himself in the

alien, discriminating world around him. Again, these factors would be expected in the normal situation of a person who has been discriminated against.

Finally, for the white family with many children, we can assume that the absence of family allowances will continue to create economic hardships, since the determination of wages in this country does not take into account the number of people a salary must support. Whether or not a particular family remains impoverished or gets supplementary support through public assistance, there will be inevitable social and psychological difficulties for them as they suffer economic deprivation and the resultant social alienation. Beyond the need for money, housing, medical care, education, day care, and recreational services, such a family might well require casework help in managing on a slim financial margin—budgeting, planning for future children, homemaking, coping with the multiple problems that accompany multiple pressures.

In all of these problems that accompany poverty, we can recognize some inherent strains that are almost always the residue of being poor. While the behavior of the people in these groupings may fall in the range of behavior known to us all, the salient point is that casework may be addressed to people below the poverty line not only because they may be maladjusted due to their deprivations, but, significantly, because the poverty inevitably carries within it obstacles to comfortable and effective social functioning. While it is true that the conditions are pathological and that casework alone cannot change these conditions very much, it is equally true that with new, integrating concepts, in linkage with community and team efforts, much can be done to affect the conditions of poverty that are concerned with individuals themselves—their life style, their family relationships, their attitudes toward the community, and their image of themselves. In all these areas the caseworker is well equipped by method, if he will but choose to use it, to help poor people in their struggle with problems that are so often larger than life itself.

Let us, then, say that any program that attacks the problem *must* include casework. The poor have been destitute for too long. There will be residual effects from generations of grinding pov-



erty, and untold numbers of individuals who have been habituated to their deprived circumstances will not by themselves be able or even willing to take full advantage of new opportunities. Casework treatment on a variety of levels will not substitute for these opportunities, but it must be made available to help these people use them. Caseworkers will be needed to deal with the full range of difficulties that can easily be anticipated, from helping a family know how to live in a housing project to drawing out the hostility, suspicion, and anomie that must inevitably characterize the feelings of one who has been poor and discriminated against all of his life. Casework may keep alive social welfare's concern with the individual, but all social work methods must address themselves to the person. The dignity of any individual is achieved out of a sense of identity which is born out of his psychosocial experiences. Whether he is alone or involved with family, group, or community, that individual must remain the object of our concern; for he is of society, and surely society is made up of many of him.

What John Hersey has said of education, we can readily apply to social casework with the poor:

We are dealing here with the healing of generations, yet the urgency is of an hour-to hour order . . . one who wants to change a school [or welfare] system must have the time sense of a geologist.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> John Hersey, "Our Romance with Poverty," *American Scholar*, XXXIII (1964), 530.



# *Abstracts*

BROWN, LOUISE A., AND MARGARET E. HARTFORD

*"Effecting Value Change in Race Relations through Group Service Agencies"*

Initiating planned value change in race relations within segregated white communities which are socially isolated from the Negro world. The phases of this process: initiation or assessment, planning for deliberate action, the action itself, and reassessment. Examples from a Cleveland YWCA staff workshop on intergroup relations.

EDELSTON, HAROLD C.

*"Voluntary Agencies and Community Action Programs." I. Issues and Problems*

The relationship of Federal antipoverty legislation to the traditional role of the private agency as innovator, particularly where the latter contracts for government funds. Ensuing administrative problems, such as the requirement of "maximum feasible participation of the poor" in community action programs.

EPSTEIN, HOWARD V.

*"Group Work to Help Older Adults Fulfill Citizen Roles"*

A group worker from the Golden Age Division, a Cleveland day care center for older Jewish adults, and his role of interpreting and justifying to the agency chain of command the project of his client group to petition congressmen on the behalf of the King-Anderson bill.

FERGUSON, ELIZABETH A.

*"Changes in Values Concerning Sexual Behavior"*

The revolution in the sexual standards of the young. The extent to which former norms of conduct are ineffective. Changing attitudes toward sex, and social factors impinging upon them. The emergence of a new code of sexual conduct.

FINESTONE, SAMUEL

*"Strategies for Research in Public Welfare Administration"*

Demonstration research as exemplified by the Experimental Welfare Center Project of the New York City Department of Welfare and the

Columbia University School of Social Work. The project's conceptual orientation, action program, administrative strategy of change efforts, and evaluative design.

GEISMAR, LUDWIG L., AND BRUCE LAGAY

"A Study of Planners' and Consumers' Priorities of Social Welfare Needs"

Priority determination: a study based on a survey of the views of fifty-eight local planners and a random sample of local residents toward priorities in social welfare services. Similarities and differences in the views of these two groups, and the ensuing implications for priority research in social welfare planning.

GOLDBERG, THEODORE

"Group Work Practice in a Juvenile Detention Center"

A student group workers' project at the Marion County Juvenile Center in Indianapolis. Direct services and activities with "living units," and the workers' efforts to influence the milieu on behalf of the children's needs.

JACOBS, ETHEL W.

"New Ways of Serving Agricultural Migrants"

Mobile casework services to meet the needs of migrants working on farms or in labor camps: a cooperative demonstration project between the New Jersey State Department of Health and the National Travelers Aid Association. Implications of the program for future policy and action.

MADISON, BERNICE Q.

"Adoption—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"

The historical background of adoption in the United States. The present—current assumption as affected by changes in agency procedures, requirements, and attitudes, as well as by findings from research and allied fields. The next ten years—some predictions and some problem areas.

MEYER, CAROL H.

"Casework below the Poverty Line"

The definition of poverty and of social casework, and their interaction. Models of practice in historical perspective. Distortions about casework's not being useful to the poor are discussed as being derived from the value choices of the caseworker, not the limitations of the method.

RACHLIS, DAVID

"Voluntary Agencies and Community Action Programs." II. A Case Example

The Community Action Program of Pittsburgh, a cooperative project of five voluntary casework agencies, and its neighborhood-based program in the city's war on poverty. The program's structure—case-finding and sustained service units; in-depth counseling and significance for clientele, staff, agency control, and funding.

RIESSMAN, FRANK

"New Approaches to Mental Health Treatment for Low-Income People"

The modification of traditional forms of therapy to accommodate the blue-collar client. Attitudes and approaches which should characterize such treatment processes. Educating the client for the necessary aspects of treatment not suited to his expectations.

SAUBER, MIGNON, AND JANICE PANETH

"Unwed Mothers Who Keep Their Children: Research and Implications"

A Community Council of Greater New York study. The unwed mother's personal associations, socioeconomic situation, living and child-care arrangements as related to her needs. Study implications of her age, ethnic origin, financial status, educational level, occupation, the putative father, and contraception.

SHIFFMAN, BERNARD M.

"Involvement of Low-Income People in Planned Community Change"

Initiating social change among the Negro inhabitants of a New Haven slum neighborhood by means of the social group work method. Examples are drawn from a community action program of Community Progress, Inc.

SIMONS, SAVILLA MILLIS

"Social Services for the Mobile Poor in Urban Areas"

Impoverished in-migrants to the cities: their characteristics, their migration patterns, and their needs. The Travelers Aid Services and government action, particularly that provided by the current antipov-erty program, designed to meet those needs.

STEIN, HERMAN D.

"Administrative Leadership in Complex Service Organizations"

Theoretical considerations related to the promotion of leadership and

imagination in three dimensions of the administrative process in complex service organizations: bureaucratic overorganization at the expense of the client; the relationship of the individual employee's needs to those of the organization; and the environment of organizational planning and decision-making.

WAKEMAN, ROY P.

*"Using Data Processing to Analyze Worker Activity"*

The Seattle Atlantic Street Center's experience with case records coded for computer processing. The advantages of such a technique for the researcher or practitioner, and the agency conditions necessary for its adoption. The effect of computer coding on the selection of diagnostic categories by the administrator, and on delineating and defining interventive techniques.

# Index

- Administration: in the CAP program, 24; caseworkers' role in, 131; in hospital organization, 43; priority of need planning by, 76-80; and public relations, 225; research in, 29-41; role of administrator in, 60; streamlining of, 226-27; voluntary agencies' problems in, 12-13
- "Administrative Leadership in Complex Service Organizations," 42-53
- Adolescents: effects of detention upon, 124
- Adoption: casework in, 210; child welfare programs for, 217; growth of professional agencies for, 206; and the illegitimate child, 101-2, 222-23; and the Negro, 208, 223; and parenthood qualifications, 206, 212-13, 224; protective services plan for, 205; religion in, 223-24; statistics for, 207; studies of, 208, 209; and U.S. Indians, 209; and volunteer agency workers, 214
- "Adoption—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," 205-28
- AFDC, *see* Aid to Families with Dependent Children
- Aging, the: casework with, 240; group work with, 107-18; Jewish Community Center (Cleveland) program for, 108-18; medicare and, 109, 111; need priority of, 90-91
- Agricultural migrants: aid for, by EOA, 152; casework service for, 152-53; legal services for, 158; legislation for, 159-60; Puerto Ricans as, 156, 157
- Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC): and contraceptive availability, 73; mothers as foster parents, 232
- Alcoholics: in-patient treatment for, 43
- Allegheny County (Pa.): Health Department, 17-18; United Fund—Community Chest structure, 19
- AMA, *see* American Medical Association
- American Medical Association (AMA): and medicare stand, 111; power of, 114
- American Red Cross, 19
- Anti-Abuse Law and aid for the mobile poor, 168
- Antipoverty programs: and the Ford Foundation, 5; and the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquents, 5, 7
- Appalachian program for prevention of poverty, 169
- Ares, Charles, cited, 172
- Argyris, Chris, quoted, 46
- ASC, *see* Atlantic Street Center
- ASC Recording System, 55-57; advantage of, 58-59, 64; development of, 62; selection of diagnostic categories by, 60-61
- Atlantic Street Center, Seattle (ASC): diagnostic categories of, 62; research-demonstration project of, 54-55; techniques of, 63-64; *see also* ASC Recording System
- Auerbach, Arnold J., quoted, 115
- Ayres, Beverly, quoted, 79
- Bagdikian, Ben H., cited, 163
- Behavior: changes in standards of, 65-75
- Bernard, Viola W., quoted, 216
- Bettelheim, Bruno, quoted, 141
- Birth control: contraceptive availability, 73, 105
- Black Muslims: curtailment of drug and alcohol usage, 185
- Boards of education: and the racial imbalance issue, 196-97; role of, with unwed mothers, 103
- Bouterse, David A., quoted, 84
- Brager, George, cited, 25
- Bristol, England: group work project, 200-2
- Brown, Louise A., paper by, 139-49
- Bushnell, John H., quoted, 70
- California: Children's Home Society in, 209

- Cannon, Mary Antoinette, quoted, 233  
 CAP, *see* Community Action Program  
 Cartwright, Dorwin, cited, 125  
 Casework: in adoptions, 210; with the aged and disabled, 240; approaches to, 233-34; criticisms of, 238-39; evaluation of, 55-56; with the migrant worker, 152-53, 154, 156; with the mobile poor, 150, 151-52; with the Negro, 240-41; on poverty, 229-42; and responsibility to the courts, 129; roles for personnel in, 131; services available for, 19, 28; Travelers Aid Services for, 166; with unwed mothers, 240; value of observations in, 130  
 "Casework below the Poverty Line," 229-42  
 Central Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited (HARYOU): program focus of, 173  
 "Changes in Values Concerning Sexual Behavior," 65-75  
 Chicago: adoption casework in, 210; program for delinquents, 181; study of migrant workers, 164-65  
 Children: casework services for, 19; illegitimate, 94-106; of minority groups, 210; of Negroes, 95; need priority of, 90-91; of Puerto Ricans, 95; *see also* Adoption  
 Children's Home Society, California: adoption work by, 209  
 Child Welfare League of America: and aid to adoption agencies, 206; adoption studies for, 209; and nationwide adoption workshops, 207; Standards for Adoption Service, 220  
 Child welfare programs: and adoption, 217; and interagency coordination, 31  
 Citizen involvement, 202-3  
 City councils and welfare services planning, 84  
 Cleveland: the Golden Age Division in, 108; YWCA integrated workshop in, 144, 147  
 Client participation under the EOA, 6, 10, 18, 79  
 Cohen, Wilbur J., quoted, 151, 160-61  
 Columbia University School of Social Work: Experimental Welfare Center Project, 29-32  
 Community action: Federal programs for, 4-6, 15-16; by low-income groups, 191-99; OEO programs for, 168, 195; and voluntary agencies, 3-16  
 Community Action Program, Pittsburgh (CAP), 17-23  
 Community Council of Greater New York: unwed mother study by, 94  
 Community Progress, Inc., New Haven (CPI): basic goal of, 193; and low-income families, 191-99  
 Community Welfare Council (N.J.): welfare activities ratings by, 81; and welfare services planning, 84  
 Congress of Racial Equality (CORE): and equal opportunities, 194  
 Copenhagen Mothers' Aid, 104  
 CORE, *see* Congress of Racial Equality  
 Counseling for unmarried fathers, 227-28  
 Cox, Harvey, quoted, 69, 70  
 Coyle, Grace L., cited, 108; quoted, 113  
 CPI, *see* Community Progress, Inc.  
 Cressey, Donald R., cited, 181; quoted, 135, 182  
 Crew Leader Registration law and the migrant worker, 159  
  
 Data processing and social agency records, 54-64  
 Decision-making: clients and, 26  
 Delaware: adoption study in, 209  
 Denmark: Copenhagen Mothers' Aid, 104  
 Dimock, Marshall E., cited, 46  
 Disabled, the: casework with, 240; need priority of, 90-91  
  
 Economic Opportunity Act (EOA): and client participation, 6, 10, 18, 79; and migrant workers, 152, 158, 160; programs of, 16-17, 23; and voluntary agencies, 3, 4, 5, 26-27  
 Edleston, Harold C., paper by, 3-16  
 Education for social work: field work training, 122  
 "Effecting Value Change in Race Relations through Group Service Agencies," 139-49  
 Ehrmann, Winston, cited, 67  
 Eligibility requirements, 167-68  
 EOA, *see* Economic Opportunity Act  
 Epstein, Howard V., paper by, 107-18  
 Experimental Welfare Center Project (New York), 29-30; programs of, 32



- Family: Federal services for, 29; multi-problem, 165; and the Negroes' problems, 231; *see also* Family social work
- Family social work, 17-18, 19, 20, 23; and unwed mothers, 99, 102
- Farnsworth, Dana L., cited, 71, 74; quoted, 68
- Federal Area Redevelopment, the: program for prevention of poverty, 169
- Federal programs, 3, 4; *see also* specific acts
- Ferguson, Elizabeth A., paper by, 65-75
- Financing social welfare: Federal contributions to agencies, 26-27, 29; for Golden Age Division, 110; for migrant workers, 169; for voluntary agencies, 8-12, 15
- Finestone, Samuel, paper by, 29-41
- Fitch, Robert E., quoted, 71
- Ford Foundation and antipoverty program, 5
- Foster care, 217; and AFDC mothers, 232
- Freud, Sigmund, quoted, 190
- Geismar, Ludwig L., paper by, 76-93
- Gilbert Youth Research, 67
- Ginzberg, Eli, quoted, 106
- Gladwin, Thomas, cited, 203
- Goldberg, Theodore, paper by, 119-38
- Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck, cited, 151
- Group service agencies: and race relations, 139-49; and the senior citizen, 108
- Group therapy, 181
- Group work, *see* Social group work
- "Group Work Practice in a Juvenile Detention Center," 119-38
- "Group Work to Help Older Adults Fulfill Citizen Roles," 107-18
- Haase, William, cited, 175, 176
- Handicapped, the: need priority of, 90-91
- Hartford, Margaret E., paper by, 139-49; quoted, 137
- HARYOU, *see* Central Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited
- Henry Street Mental Hygiene Clinic, 183
- Hersey, John, quoted, 242
- Herzog, Elizabeth, quoted, 100, 231
- HEW, *see* U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
- Hollingshead two-factor status scale, 87n, 92
- Housing: for the mobile poor, 165; and racial fair practices, 148; as a requirement for public aid, 167-68
- Human Relations Council and equal opportunities, 194
- Hunter, David R., quoted, 166-67
- Indianapolis: Marion County Juvenile Center, 119
- Indiana University Division of Social Service: field work training, 122
- Intervention: evaluation and study of techniques in, 63-64
- "Involvement of Low-Income People in Planned Community Change," 188-204
- Jacobs, Ethel W., paper by, 150-61
- Janowitz, Morris, quoted, 141
- Jennings, Helen, cited, 180
- Jewish centers and group work, 196
- Jewish Community Center (Cleveland): and senior citizens, 108-18
- Jewish Community Federation (Cleveland) and fund controls, 110
- Jewish Welfare Fund (Cleveland) and senior citizens, 110
- Johnson, Lyndon B., quoted, 4-5
- Juvenile delinquency: Chicago program for, 181; and effect of confinement, 120, 121; group work practice in, 119-38; the President's Committee on, 5, 7; prevention and control of, 192
- Kahn, Alfred J., cited, 104
- Kahn, T., quoted, 185
- Keyserling, Leon H., cited, 231
- King-Anderson bill: Golden Age endorsement of, 117; and senior citizens, 111
- Kinsey, A. C., cited, 67
- Krugman, Dorothy C., quoted, 213
- Labor, *see* Agricultural migrants; Migratory labor
- Lagay, Bruce W., paper by, 76-93
- Lagey, Joseph, quoted, 79
- Legal Aid Society, 17-18
- Levine, Rachel, quoted, 183
- Levit, Gertrude, cited, 180
- Link clubs, 199-200

- Los Angeles adoption project, 210
- Lurie, Harry L., quoted, 159
- McGregor, Douglas, quoted, 47
- Madison, Bernice Q., paper by, 205-28
- Mannheim, Karl, cited, 141; quoted, 140
- Manpower: Labor Department report on, 169-70
- Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA): programs of, 5, 9; and voluntary agencies, 3, 4, 12
- Marion County Juvenile Center (Indianapolis), 119
- Marshall, Kenneth, quoted, 185
- Mayor's Committee on Human Resources, Inc. (Pittsburgh), 18; and criterion for employment, 22; program evaluation by, 26
- MDTA, *see* Manpower Development and Training Act
- Medicare: AMA stand on, 111; and the senior citizen, 109, 111
- Mencher, Samuel, cited, 82, 92; quoted, 76-77, 78
- Mental health: as a factor in adoptions, 209; summary model table of, 187; treatment for, with low-income groups, 174-87
- Mental Health-Retardation Centers Act, 174
- Mentally ill, the: and hospital organization, 43
- Mental retardation: need priority in, 90-91
- Merton, Robert K., quoted, 100
- Meyer, Carol H., paper by, 229-42
- MFY, *see* Mobilization for Youth
- Migrant Health Act (1962), 160
- Migratory labor: and the Crew Leader Registration Law, 159; and the EOA, 152, 158, 160; funds for, 169; influence of Social Security Act on, 158-59, 166; Negroes as, 157, 163, 165; Puerto Ricans as, 165; social work with, 150-61; study of, 164-65; volunteer work with, 156-57; *see also* Agricultural migrants
- Miller, Daniel R., quoted, 174
- Minnesota: and protective services plan for adoptions, 205
- Mobile poor: and the Anti-Abuse Law, 168; casework with, 150, 151-52; definition of, 162; social services for, 162-73; study of housing for, 165, 166
- Mobilization for Youth (MFY): and the indigenous worker, 25; and the non-professional worker, 11
- Morgan, Edward T., quoted, 203-4
- NAACP, *see* National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- NASW, *see* National Association of Social Workers
- National Adoption Conference, 207; changes brought about by, 210
- National Adoption Survey and nationwide workshops, 207
- National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor, 159
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and equal opportunities responsibility, 194
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW): and social group work, 137
- National Council of Jewish Women and senior citizens, 108
- National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor, 159
- National Institute of Mental Health adoption studies, 209
- National Social Welfare Assembly: public welfare position of, 150
- National Study Service and the mobile poor, 166
- National Survey: adoption changes brought about by, 210
- National Travelers Aid, *see* Travelers Aid Association
- Negroes: and adoption, 208, 223; case-work with, 240-41; changing roles of, 141; extended family life of, 231; as migrant workers, 157, 163, 165; and out-of-wedlock births, 95; and poverty vulnerability, 233; in the YWCA, 145-49
- Neighborhood Youth Corps, 12
- "New Approaches to Mental Health Treatment for Low-Income People," 174-87
- New Haven: Community Progress, Inc. (CPI), 191-99; work crew project, 198-99
- New Jersey: casework service for agricultural migrants, 152-53; State Department of Health, 150, 151
- "New Ways of Serving Agricultural Migrants," 150-61

- New York: adoption studies in, 209, 210; Experimental Welfare Center Project in, 29-30; study of unwed mothers in, 94-106; and welfare department problems with innovations, 38
- New York City Department of Welfare, 33-34; Experimental Welfare Center Project, 29-32; and unwed mothers, 99, 102
- New York State Citizens Committee on Welfare Costs, 167
- New York State Department of Social Welfare: contraceptive information, 105
- Odell, Charles E., quoted, 114
- OEO, *see* Office of Economic Opportunity
- Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO): community action programs of, 21-22, 168, 195; and legal services for the poor, 172; and welcoming service centers, 171
- Ornati, Oscar, quoted, 151
- Orshansky, Mollie, cited, 232-33, 239-40
- Paneth, Janice, paper by, 94-106
- Parenthood: requirements for, in adoptions, 206, 212-13, 224
- Peace Corps, 74
- Perlman, Helen Harris, cited, 67, 69
- Personnel: communication among, 133; decision-making involvement of, 46-47; indigenous workers, 24-25; methods for evaluation of, 48-49; nonprofessionals, 11; recruitments and training of, 22-23; requirements for, 24, 25; roles of social workers, 34-35; volunteers, 156-57, 214
- Pittsburgh: Community Action Program (CAP), 17, 18, 19, 20-21, 22, 23; and program staffing, 24; and programs for the poor, 23-24
- "Planners' and Consumers' Priorities of Social Welfare Needs," 76-93
- Planning: of caseloads, 34; for organizational changes, 29-30, 36, 39; for welfare needs, 76, 84; *see also* Priority planning
- Polsky, Howard W., quoted, 127
- Poor, the: legal services for, 172; *see also* Poverty
- Poverty: Appalachian program against, 169; casework on, 229-42; and mental health, 174-87; and the mobile poor, 162-73; Negro vulnerability to, 233; primary criteria of, 230-31; voluntary agencies' programs against, 23-24
- President's Committee on the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency, 192; and antipoverty program, 5, 7; and Youth Development Grant, 195
- President's Task Force on Community Assistance, 169
- Priority planning: citizen participation in, 77-78; in social work practice, 80, 83; as welfare corrective, 92-93
- Protective services: child health stations as, 105; lack of, for unwed mothers, 102-6; for the poor, 18; public policy and legislation for, 167-68
- Public assistance: interagency coordination in, 31; and the unwed mother, 97-98
- Public relations in administration, 225
- Public welfare: research in administration of, 29-41; residence requirements, 167-68
- Public Welfare Amendments (1962), 167
- Puerto Ricans: as migratory labor, 156, 157, 165; out-of-wedlock births, 95; pre-migration counseling services for, 170
- Race relations: and equal opportunity responsibilities, 194; and group service agencies, 139-49; and housing practices, 148; imbalances in, 196-97; and integration in YWCA, 143-48
- Rachlis, David, paper by, 16-28
- Record keeping: role of data processing in, 54-64
- Redlich, Frederick C., quoted, 188-89
- Reliability tests for priority need planners, 86-87
- Research: on priority planning, 76-93; in public welfare administration, 29-41; on sexual behavior, 67; on social work evaluation, 54-55; studies on adoption, 209; about unwed mothers, 94-106; uses for, 221-22; on welfare goals, 81
- Reynolds, Bertha C., quoted, 233
- Richmond, Mary, cited, 24; quoted, 17
- Riessman, Frank, paper by, 174-86; quoted, 11, 231
- Roles: of Negroes, 141; for senior citizens, 107-18; of voluntary agencies, 4

- Rosenberg, Morris, cited, 180  
 Rosengren, William R., cited, 44  
 Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work: study of welfare goals, 81
- San Francisco adoption project, 210  
 Sauber, Mignon, paper by, 94-106  
 Seattle: Atlantic Street Center project, 54-55  
 Sexual behavior: changes in, 65-75; Gilbert Youth Research on, 67  
 Shiffman, Bernard M., paper by, 188-204  
 Simon, Herbert A., cited, 49-50  
 Simons, Savilla Millis, paper by, 162-73; quoted, 173  
 Social action: senior citizens and, 109 ff.  
 Social change: plans for, with low-income people, 188-204  
 Social group work: in Bristol, England, 200-2; in juvenile delinquency, 119-38; NASW definition of, 137; with senior citizens, 107-18  
 Social Security Act: influence of, on migrant workers, 158-59, 166  
 Social Security Amendments (1964), 167  
 "Social Services for the Mobile Poor in Urban Areas," 162-73  
 Social welfare: activities' importance ratings, 81; priority of need planning in, 76-93  
 Social work practice: and goal determination, 142; priority determination in, 80, 83; social group work method in, 119; *see also* Casework  
 Southard, Helen, quoted, 68, 70-71  
 Sparer, Edward V., quoted, 168  
 Special Services Unit (New York), 35; evaluative design of, 40  
 Spencer, John, cited, 200; quoted, 201, 202  
 Spiegel, John P., quoted, 183  
 Strole Anomic Scale, 85  
 Stein, Herman D., paper by, 42-53  
 "Strategies for Research in Public Welfare Administration," 29-41  
 Swanson, Guy E., quoted, 174
- Theis, Sophie van Sender, cited, 206  
 Travelers Aid Association, 19; casework services of, 150, 151-52, 166; and the EOA, 158; migrant workers study by, 154, 164-65; and premigration counseling, 170; proposed welcoming service centers, 171; referrals to, 170  
 Travelers Aid Chain of Service, 155, 157; and the mobile newcomer, 172
- United Appeal and funds for senior citizens, 110  
 U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and adoption studies, 209  
 U.S. Children's Bureau aid to adoption agencies, 206, 207  
 U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW): Bureau of Family Services, 29; funds for migrants, 169; unwed mother statistics, 101  
 U.S. Department of Labor: aid to New Haven's community action program, 192; report on manpower, 169-70  
 Unmarried fathers: counseling for, 227-28  
 Unwed mothers: casework with, 240; among Negroes, 95; public assistance for, 97-98, 99; among Puerto Ricans, 95; statistics on, 101; study of, in New York, 94; training and education for, 103, 104  
 "Unwed Mothers Who Keep Their Children: Research and Implications," 94-106  
 "Using Data Processing to Analyze Worker Activity," 54-64
- Vancouver Area Development Project, 62  
 Veterans Administration: interaction of, with other agencies, 52  
 Vincent, Clark, cited, 67, 68  
 VISTA and in New Haven CPI project, 195  
 Volkman, Rita, quoted, 182  
 Voluntary agencies: administration problems in, 12-13; funds for, 8-12, 15; participation of in Federal programs, 3, 4, 5, 26-27; role of, 4  
 "Voluntary Agencies and Community Action Programs: I. Issues and Problems," 3-16  
 "Voluntary Agencies and Community Action Programs: II. A Case Example," 16-28  
 Volunteers: as adoption agency workers, 214; working with migratory labor, 156-57

- Wakeman, Roy P., paper by, 54-64  
Washington, D.C.: adoption study in, 209  
Whyte, William Foote, cited, 52  
Wider City Parish (New Haven): and link groups, 199  
Williams, Harrison A., Senator: and farm labor laws, 159  
Winthrop, Robert Charles, quoted, 161  
Wittenberg, Rudolph M., quoted, 184  
Women, single, as adoptive parents, 224  
Woodard, Mrs. Edith, cited, 198; quoted, 196, 197  
Work crew project (New Haven), 198-99  
Young, Bruce F., cited, 180  
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and integration, 143-48  
YWCA, *see* Young Women's Christian Association  
Zander, Alvin, cited, 125





Papers presented at the 92d Annual Forum may also be found in *The Social Welfare Forum, 1965*, published by Columbia University Press:

Law and Social Welfare *Sol Morton Isaac*

Social Change through the Legislative and Administrative Process  
*Hubert H. Humphrey*

Social Change through Federal Legislation *Elizabeth Wickenden*

Civil Rights—Unfinished Business

I. Civil Rights and a Concerned Community *LeRoy Collins*

II. Civil Rights and a Militant Profession *Whitney M. Young, Jr.*

Poverty in the United States—What Next? *Sargent Shriver*

The Law and Family Relationships *William Pincus*

The Legal Renaissance in the Juvenile Court *Orman W. Ketcham*

Legal Services for the Poor *Max Doverman*

Concerted Decision-making in the Community *Roland L. Warren*

The Future Structure of Community Services *Alvin L. Schorr*

Community Action and Institutional Change *Simon Slavin*

Social Work and Organizational Change *Robert L. Kahn and Daniel Katz*

Is There a Moral Right to Violate the Law? *John de J. Pemberton, Jr.*

Mobilizing the Poor for Social Action *George Brager and Harry Specht*

Measuring Poverty *Mollie Orshansky*

A Social Work Practitioner to Meet New Challenges *Alex Rosen*

Social Issues and Religiously Sponsored Social Welfare Agencies *Sanford Solender*













104428

HV  
88  
A3  
v.92  
pt.2

104428

National Conference on  
Social Welfare.  
Social work practice

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME

National  
Social

**THEOLOGY LIBRARY**  
**SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT**  
**CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA**



PRINTED IN U.S.A.

